Salon to Biennial — *Exhibitions That Made Art History*

Volume 1: 1863-1959

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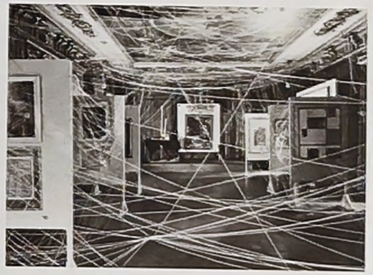

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Exhibitions That Made Art History

Volume 1: 1863-1959

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Salon to Biennial —
Exhibitions That Made Art History

Volume 1: 1863-1959

Conceived and edited by
Phaidon Editors and Bruce Altshuler
Introductory essay and chapter introductions
by Bruce Altshuler

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Bruce Altshuler is director of the Program in Museum Studies, Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, New York University. From 1992 to 1998 he was director of the Isamu Noguchi Garden Museum, Long Island City, New York. Altshuler is the author of *The Avant-Garde in Exhibition: New Art in the 20th Century* and of *Isamu Noguchi* and the editor of *Collecting the New: Museums and Contemporary Art*.

Author's Acknowledgments
When I was approached by Phaidon Press to work on this project—the first real sourcebook for key exhibitions in the history of modern art—I was particularly excited by the prospect of being able to include rare visual materials and primary texts that have long been unavailable. I would like to thank Phaidon Press for talking on the research required to achieve a work of this scope, with special thanks to Valerie Breuvart, commissioning editor, and Elizabeth B. Zechiella, project editor.

If there is a subtext running through my writing on the history of exhibitions, it is the essential role played by artists as pioneering exhibition organizers and their eventual loss of control over the display of their work. For prompting me to recognize the centrality of artists, and for personal support over many years, I am grateful most of all to Holly Hughes.

Publisher's Acknowledgements
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Note
Many sources were consulted for this publication and every effort has been made to represent the information as accurately as possible. Spellings of artists' names and other proper names have been anglicized. In the documentary texts sections, minor misspellings of artists' names or other proper names have been retained. If misspellings had the potential to cause confusion, the correct spelling has been inserted in brackets. In cases where the contents of a traveling exhibition changed after the primary venue, the artist list and number of art works reflect those of the primary venue.

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Preface

Those engaged in the study of exhibitions frequently come upon little-known documents that enrich, or even radically revise, our understanding of modern and contemporary art. But these documents often remain hidden in archives, libraries, and obscure publications. Most powerful among them are installation photographs, which provide a visual connection to crucial art historical events, allowing subtle—and occasionally not-so-subtle—aspects of display to cast new light on seemingly well-known shows and institutions. Making such images available is a central purpose of *Salon to Biennial: Exhibitions That Made Art History*. Equally essential are contemporary texts from catalogs, newspapers, and journals, supplying vital context and first-hand views of artists, organizers, critics, and their fellows. With the growing art historical interest in exhibitions and art world institutions, such documentation plays an increasingly important role in our understanding of the past. Scrutinizing the historical presentation of art also illuminates our own experience, prompting a more nuanced perspective on current artistic and curatorial practice.

Any project that assembles material documenting such a range of activity, and across so many years, starts with a crucial and potentially contentious selection process. Even though the opportunity to publish this work in two volumes allowed us to include almost fifty different exhibitions, ranging from 1863 to the present, the abundance of prospective entries and the amount of information about them made for extremely difficult choices. Focusing on group exhibitions of contemporary art, rather than single-artist shows, provided one constraint. Additional limits arose from practical concerns; for instance, several important exhibitions had to be omitted only for lack of documentation. (In the case of the four earliest exhibitions in volume 1, the historical significance of the shows themselves trumped the unavailability of installation photographs, which was otherwise a fundamental selection criterion.)

Another consideration in selecting these exhibitions was their resonance with current views of what is historically important. Art historical discussions have recently expanded to encompass the roles of the market and art world institutions, artmaking by members of marginalized groups, and activities in non-Western nations and post-colonial societies. We have included some exhibitions here because they reflect on one or another of these developments, but the main thread of the two volumes of *Salon to Biennial* runs through exhibitions featuring the canonical movements and characters in modern and contemporary art. Since this is the first work to publish a large amount of exhibition documentation, it was important to include such historically significant shows, for the exhibitions may be well known, but many of the installation photographs and period texts relating to them are not. Other shows certainly could have been chosen: this selection is determined by our view of the significance of these particular exhibitions for how art was and would be produced, seen, and understood. It is a selection inflected—like the evaluation of artworks themselves—by personal background and taste.

Introduction

Bruce Altshuler

To exhibit is to find friends and allies for the struggle.
—ÉDOUARD MANET, *1867*

The study of exhibitions provides a fascinating route into art history. Here the social, political, and economic forces that shape artistic production and distribution come together, exerting their various pressures on artists, critics, collectors, dealers, institutional players, and the art-viewing public. The primacy of the individual artist is fundamental to our understanding of artistic invention, but Manet's observation suggests that the social world within which artists work, the groups and interpersonal relationships that they form, is also critical. This social dimension has never been more prominent than in the modern period, a time of avant-garde movements and manifestos, and of the exhibitions that mark their activity.

The standard story of modern art begins with the break from Academic art by such figures as Gustave Courbet and Édouard Manet, and it is punctuated by shows of their work outside the conservative Salons controlled by the French Academy. Indeed, Manet made his remark on the role of exhibitions in just such a context; it comes from the catalog for a show of his own work that he organized and presented alongside Courbet's display of his own paintings. Both exhibitions were located in independent pavilions erected between the sites of the Salon and the 1867 Universal Exposition in Paris. These self-presentations exemplify the artist-organized exhibitions that would be crucial to the development of advanced art during the next hundred years.

The received model of avant-garde rebellion seems wholly appropriate here, for the 1867 Salon was one of the most restrictive in history, with 2,000 of 3,000 submissions rejected by the conservative jury. Those rejected included Manet, Paul Cézanne, Pierre-Auguste Renoir, Camille Pissarro, Alfred Sisley, and Frédéric Bazille—the most complete exclusion of members of the future Impressionist group ever imposed by the Salon. This across-the-board rejection of advanced painters was not consistent with previous or subsequent jury selections, however. The 1864 Salon had included paintings by all of the above-mentioned artists except Sisley, who seems not to have submitted an entry. In 1868, a year after the mass rejection, Renoir, Manet, Claude Monet, Pissarro, and Sisley were all accepted into the Salon. Presumptions of bias against the new are equally confounded when one considers that in 1855 the government-organized Universal Exposition offered one-person retrospective exhibitions to Eugène Delacroix and Courbet, aesthetic foes of the Academy and of the arch-Academic Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres, who was also given such a retrospective. Courbet declined the offer, instead mounting his first independent show just across avenue Montaigne from the 1855

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Exposition's art exhibition. Clearly, matters are a bit more complicated than the standard account suggests.[1]

The Academy (Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture) was founded in 1648 by court artists attempting to distinguish themselves from artisans. Opposition to what were considered lower forms of creative production would remain central to the Academy's self-definition, and to its dealings with non-Academic artists, through the nineteenth century. Hostility to commerce was a significant feature of the ideological ground of the Academy, whose members served the state through the elevated practice of history painting. This stance created a deep ambivalence toward the display of their work, for exhibiting artworks seemed much too similar to displaying goods for sale. Following several years of resistance and only after being forced by Louis XIV's prime minister, Jean-Baptiste Colbert, the Academicians agreed to mount regular exhibitions for the court. This resulted in what is generally cited as the first Salon, held in the Palais-Royal in 1667. By 1699 the exhibition's growth prompted a move to the Grand Galerie of the Louvre, and in 1725 to the Louvre's Galerie d'Apollon and Salon Carré, from which it derived the name by which it would long be known.[2]

As an instrument of the state and a channel for aristocratic patronage, the Academy controlled the exhibition of French painting and sculpture until the Revolution. Up to that point, participation in the Salon was restricted to members of the Academy, but with the monarchy deposed and its institutions destroyed, the Salon was opened to all artists, both French and foreign. The first open Salon, in 1791, had 794 entries, more than twice the number in the final Academicians-only Salon. The number increased steadily over the next century, reaching 5,434 in 1870.[3] Even before this expansion, the Salon had become the occasion for the kind of public display and discussion that we associate with the modern art world. Large and diverse Parisian audiences visited the eighteenth-century Salons free of charge, and numerous critics scrutinized them in published commentaries. It was thus the first public space for art in the modern sense, inviting aesthetic judgments from those outside the circle of patronage.[4]

Beginning in the eighteenth century and accelerating in the nineteenth, aristocratic and state patronage declined and private sales became artists' primary means of support. This was true not only in Paris but throughout the Continent and in Britain, where popular shows proliferated, most notably the annual exhibition of London's Royal Academy, first held in 1769. The shifting economic foundation of artistic production and consumption led to a rapidly growing number of artists, who required greater support than could be provided by a government structure designed to sustain only a limited number of them.[5] Having prompted many people to turn to art as a career and attracting large numbers of them to Paris, and having vastly expanded the audience for artworks, the French Salon system contributed to its own demise by creating demands it could not satisfy.

Once the Salon was opened to those outside the Academy, and to those from outside France, the commercialization that had been so disdained—and feared—by Academicians became the rule of the day. Exhibition catalogs published the addresses of the artists so that collectors could arrange purchase directly. And the Salon itself was increasingly dominated by landscapes, still lifes, and most notably genre scenes—works smaller and more affordable, and by Academic standards less elevated, than the history paintings that were the hallmark of the old tradition.[6] Now artists could attract their own patrons and establish reputations outside an exclusive institutional system. Even the French government began to treat the Salon as something of a retail enterprise when, in 1804, Napoleon was persuaded not to award commissions to prize-winning artists but to have the state buy from among the works on display.[7]

Although the Salon, and reactions to it, have tended to dominate art-historical scholarship, the Universal Expositions—or World's Fairs—of the mid to late nineteenth century were also central to the institutional development of modern art. From London's 1851 Great Exhibition of Works of Industry of All Nations—that of Crystal Palace fame—through to the turn of the century, fifteen major expositions in Europe and America attracted millions of visitors to marvel at the commercial and cultural goods of a progressively interconnected industrial world.[8] The Great Exhibition did not include an art show, except for a number of sculptures presented to illustrate industrial fabrication processes, but every exposition thereafter featured a major international art exhibition. Artists for these shows were selected by national committees, and their works were as much a part of the competition among nations as were the machinery and consumer products on display elsewhere. Unlike the many exhibitions throughout Europe that were modeled on the French Salon, in which artworks represented individual creators, at these international expositions the artists represented their countries, and their artworks were viewed as examples of national schools or styles. Here art was set within a competitive trade context, with prizewinning entries viewed by government sponsors to encourage sale of the country's goods and promotion of the nation's reputation, just as such prizes did in the case of steam engines or porcelain.

These expositions soon led to the creation of independent international art exhibitions throughout Europe.[9] Much as the 1990s saw biennials established worldwide as vehicles of economic development, the second half of the nineteenth century witnessed European cities and states sponsoring shows to secure their

↑ The Gallery of Fine Arts, Universal Exposition, Paris, 1867.

↓ The Crystal Palace, built in 1851 for the Great Exhibition of Works of Industry of All Nations, London, c. 1890.

reputations as cultural centers and to increase sales for local artists. The first of these government-sponsored international fine art exhibitions to be held independently of an international exposition was installed in Munich's Glaspalast by the Bavarian state in 1869. Often mounted with the help of local art academies and artists' societies, these exhibitions soon superseded the conservative national salons. By the turn of the century, significant international exhibitions were being regularly presented in major European cities, with artwork selected by national juries and installed by country, and prizes awarded by international juries. The most famous and enduring of these is the Venice Biennale, founded in 1895.

The complexity of the situation can be seen in the Salons of the 1850s, which exemplified both the new commerciality and the conservative reaction to it. Unlike the British Royal Academy exhibition, the French Salon had always been free to the public, attracting hordes of visitors, including workers and students. But after the 1855 Universal Exposition successfully charged for entry to its art exhibition, the Salon instituted an admission fee every day except Sunday. Of equal symbolic importance, after the Salon lost its longstanding home in the Louvre in 1849, was its move to the Exposition's Palais de l'Industrie, built for the display of industrial and retail products, in a venue that strongly suggested the art world's increasingly commercial character. But in a return to the old order the government constituted the 1857 jury entirely from the Academy, although state pressure yielded a liberal selection, including the first photographs shown in a Salon.[10] With the Academy maintaining control of the jury it would become more exclusionary in the next few years, provoking artist protests beginning in 1859 and culminating in the famous "Salon des Refusés," the exhibition with which *Salon to Biennial* begins.[11]

The "Salon des Refusés" resulted from Napoleon III's mandate that artists rejected by the 1863 Salon jury be allowed to exhibit at the other end of the Palais de l'Industrie. But the exhibition did not consist entirely of works that had broken the rules of the Academy. With noteworthy exceptions, such as Manet's *Luncheon on the Grass* (Le déjeuner sur l'herbe), the exhibition's significance lay less in its content than in its having originated in an artists' protest against the Salon jury, and in the emperor's decision to allow the public to judge artistic value for itself by seeing exactly what the jury had rejected. The exhibition thus represents an empowering moment for artists and for a public that would regularly make known its feelings about modern art. Exhibitions would become critical modes of artistic empowerment, organized by the artists themselves to bring their work before the public and to the notice of the dealers on whom their livelihood would increasingly depend. Throughout Europe artists founded exhibition

societies; most were relatively conservative but some, such as the Secessions of Vienna and Berlin, were highly innovative on occasion.[13] Preeminent among artist-led groups were the organizations that mounted the two alternative Parisian salons, the Salon des Indépendants (established in 1884), early home of Neo-Impressionism, and the Salon d'Automne (established in 1903), site of concentrated displays of Fauves and Cubists.[14]

Beyond exhibition societies with venues of their own, many artist-organized shows were held in nonart spaces procured for the occasion, a major precedent being The First Impressionist Exhibition, which was mounted in the former studio of the photographer Nadar (Gaspard-Félix Tournachon) in 1874.[15] This tradition is central to the history of the avant-garde, from the Café Volpini exhibition of Paul Gauguin and friends on the grounds of the 1889 Universal Exposition and the two Die Brücke exhibitions held in a Dresden lamp showroom in 1906 to "The Times Square Show" organized by the artist group Colab in 1980.[16] Independent siting is characteristic of the artist-organized display of advanced work, but such shows also took place in galleries turned over temporarily to artists by sympathetic art dealers. Examples include some of the best-known exhibitions of modern art, including the first Blaue Reiter show in Munich in 1911, "0.10: The Last Futurist Exhibition of Pictures" in Petrograd (now St. Petersburg) in 1915, the Berlin "The First International Dada Fair" of 1920, and the 1938 "Exposition Internationale du Surréalisme" in Paris.

Without minimizing the centrality of the artists and their exhibitions, it is important to make clear that art dealers and the commercial trade were also essential to the development of advanced art. The very idea of the avant-garde—of a series of masters and movements that progresses by repeatedly overthrowing accepted norms and practices—was inseparable from a commercial system of investment and exhibition.[16] In exhibiting and selling Impressionist paintings, dealers such as Paul Durand-Ruel demonstrated that significant profit could be made from the new art, and they carried on by investing in works by Vincent van Gogh, Gauguin, and Paul Cézanne. After the state presented the Impressionists as the height of French cultural achievement at the 1900 Universal Exposition, a series of large retrospective exhibitions at the alternative Paris salons positioned the Post-Impressionists as the next masters in a lineage of aesthetic innovation.[17] Assembled in collaboration with the dealers who had invested in this tradition of the new, these retrospectives—along with the ideology of artistic progress that they represented—established the historical narrative in which young artists hoped to find a place. New movements—Fauvism, Cubism, Futurism—arose to continue the line, promoted by cultural impresarios such as Guillaume Apollinaire and F. T. Marinetti, and profits beckoned to the dealers

↓ The jury of the Salon, Paris, 1903.

↓↓ Cubist installation, Room 11, Salon d'Automne, Paris, 1912.

→ Edvard Munch retrospective, International Exhibition of the Sonderbund, Cologne, 1912.

↘ Works by Willi Baumeister, Oskar Schlemmer, László Moholy-Nagy, and Hans Belling, National Gallery, Crown Prince's Palace, Berlin, 1930.

↘↘ Works by Piet Mondrian, Mies van der Rohe, and others in El Lissitzky's Abstract Cabinet, Landesmuseum, Hanover, 1927–28.

and collectors who supported them. It would be wrong to characterize their motivations as wholly venal, of course, for engaged dealers were committed to the new art and often made sacrifices to support it.

Large exhibitions outside France exported the process begun in Paris, displaying both modern masters and new candidates for the lineage. In 1910 Roger Fry named the newest canon with his controversial exhibition at London's Grafton Galleries, "Manet and the Post-Impressionists." That same year the second exhibition of the Munich New Artists' Association presented a comprehensive view of what was being done in Paris, including paintings by Pablo Picasso and Georges Braque, who refused to display their work in the huge French salons. (Munich in 1910 also hosted shows of works by Gauguin and Henri Matisse, plus a major exhibition of Islamic art that drew visitors from across Europe.) The most impressive of the prewar pan-European exhibitions was the International Exhibition of the Sonderbund, held in Cologne in 1912, which included significant retrospectives of van Gogh, Gauguin, Cézanne, and Edvard Munch, as well as a large survey of current painting focusing on French and German artists.[18] Soon this combination of historical narrative and contemporary report would transform the American art world, when the organizers of the 1913 Armory Show in New York attempted a version of what one of them had seen in Cologne, complete with a display of Post-Impressionist masters.

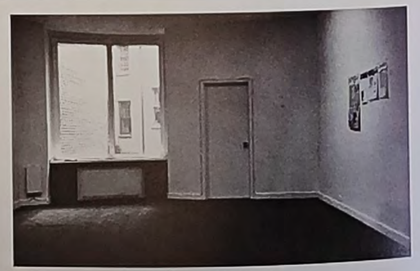
In addition to artists and dealers, as well as the critics and collectors who were so crucial to the system, museums became increasingly important. But while artists and the art trade were in the business of presenting the new, this was a conceptual challenge for museums, which were viewed as institutions dedicated to collecting and displaying works that had withstood the test of time.[19] As Gertrude Stein allegedly stated, something could be modern or it could be in a museum, but it could not be both. Although museums had collected works by living artists throughout the nineteenth century, after the advent of modernism, art that was new in fundamental conception as well as in chronology was largely excluded. In 1818 the Luxembourg Palace was converted to the Museum of Living Artists and charged with holding works that might someday ascend to the Louvre. The government purchased paintings and sculptures from the Salon for the Luxembourg and for a growing system of provincial museums, but not until 1896, after much controversy, did a group of Impressionist works enter the collection, the result of a compromise accepting a portion of Gustave Caillebotte's gift of his collection to France.

That same year, Hugo von Tschudi was named director of the National Gallery in Berlin, an event that heralded the leadership of German museums in collecting and displaying contemporary art.[20]

(In 1912 Wassily Kandinsky and Franz Marc dedicated the *Blaue Reiter Almanac* to his memory.) Tschudi's acquisition of modern art in Berlin, and then in Munich at the Neue Pinakothek, was carried on by other museum directors throughout the country. By the 1920s they were bringing in the work of the international avant-garde in substantial numbers and, in the process, providing significant support to progressive German artists. Only with the Nazis' removal of close to sixteen thousand artworks from state museums would the extent of their purchases become clear. In 1937 the German public was able to see a selection of this confiscated work brutally presented in the "Degenerate Art" ("Entartete Kunst") exhibition, whose attendance, ironically, was the greatest of any modern art show of the century.

Museums were important not only for their growing role in supporting and confirming contemporary artistic developments and placing them within an art-historical narrative, but also for the creation of new display strategies. In this respect, too, the German museums of the 1920s were innovators, with El Lissitzky's 1927–28 Abstract Cabinet, a gallery designed for the Landesmuseum in Hanover, garnering the most attention. Commissioned by pioneering museum director Alexander Dorner, the gallery, created specifically to house abstract art, featured metal-slat walls whose color shifted with the viewer's position and a sliding frame system that allowed for paintings to be readily changed.[23] Dorner, like Tschudi, wanted museums to reflect the dynamism of modern life rather than function as mausoleums of past achievement, and he saw the presentation of experimental work in an interactive setting as critical to that mission. But the most influential installation model to emerge out of Germany moved in the opposite direction, toward a purist, decontextualized space in which artworks are isolated from the world in which they originated: the "white cube."[24]

The development of modern modes of display is not unrelated to the shifting economic conditions connected with the emergence of the avant-garde. The traditional salon-style presentation, characterized by walls hung with paintings floor to ceiling, had developed in eighteenth-century France and spread throughout Europe, Russia, and Great Britain. Its visual chaos made much of the work difficult to see, and artists were particularly unhappy when their paintings were "skied" high up the salon walls. This exhibition model, however, was designed not for the artists' or visitors' pleasure but to display the paintings toward which the patronage system was geared: large-scale works meant for aristocratic and public settings. With the development of a market of buyers seeking artworks for less grandiose private homes, it became important for smaller paintings to be seen well, and it made commercial sense for art to be shown in something like a domestic environment. Nineteenth-century Parisian dealers such as Durand-Ruel and Georges Petit and establishments like London's Grosvenor Galleries presented their wares in luxurious interiors that felt far more domestic than the clamorous public salons.



↙ "Modern Works of Art: Fifth Anniversary Exhibition," Museum of Modern Art, New York, 1934.

↙↙ "Bloodflames," installation designed by Frederick Kiesler (right) and curated by Nicolas Calas (left), Hugo Gallery, New York, 1947.

↙↙↙ "January 5–31, 1969," curated by Seth Siegelaub, 44 East 52nd Street, New York, 1969, with works by (left to right) Douglas Huebler (papers on the windowsill), Lawrence Weiner (stain on the rug near window), Robert Barry (labels on wall near the door), and Joseph Kosuth (newspapers on wall).

↓ Bruce Nauman's video work *Good Boy Bad Boy* (1985), installed in a private home as part of the exhibition "Chambres d'amis," Ghent, Belgium, 1986.

Artists were not immune to such concerns in the display of their own works. Edgar Degas proposed that paintings be hung without crowding in two horizontal rows, and this arrangement was used for the first of the eight artist-organized Impressionist exhibitions.[33] The Impressionists showed their work on subtly colored backgrounds instead of the strong red walls of the Salon in an effort to enhance aesthetic appreciation and encourage the purchase of paintings for domestic spaces. In their fifth exhibition (1880) the walls were tinted to coordinate with the paintings that hung on them, and in the sixth exhibition (1881) Pissarro's frames were in colors complementary to each work. (James McNeill Whistler pioneered this emphasis on decorative presentation in his first one-person exhibition in London in 1874.[34]) Opposing what was viewed as the highly commercial look of the Salon, these artists employed a decorative aesthetic and domestic associations to achieve their own equally commercial ends. Soon the Neo-Impressionists, appearing together in their own room at the Salon des Indépendants, replaced the red wall coverings of the rest of the show with a neutral gray; they also used white and gray frames to emphasize the autonomy of their paintings from the surrounding environment. Here we find ourselves on the road toward the modernist white cube, whose stripped-down character and striving for neutrality also suggest an invitation to aesthetic autonomy.

The adoption of the white cube as an international standard for the display of modern and contemporary art can be credited largely to the exhibitions mounted during the 1930s at the Museum of Modern Art in New York by founding director Alfred H. Barr, Jr. But it was on a study trip to Germany in the late 1920s that Barr came upon the kind of display that he would adapt for MoMA when it was established in 1929.[35] There—in Dorner-installed galleries at the Landesmuseum in Hanover and at the Folkwang Museum in Essen—Barr and his future architecture curator, Philip Johnson, saw pictures widely spaced and hung at eye level on a neutral background, rather than stacked salon-style on dark walls. Beginning by hanging works on off-white "monk's cloth" and later moving to walls painted bright white, in a clean architectural setting with no decorative elements to distract the eye, Barr presented modern painting and sculpture in a way that highlighted their formal characteristics and relationships. Thus displayed, these works could readily be set within the developmental story of modern art as a path toward abstraction, a narrative whose classic statement he presented at the museum's 1936 exhibition "Cubism and Abstract Art." But the white-cube exhibition space has long outlasted the modernist world picture with which it is associated.

And even though there have been noteworthy exceptions—such as the biomorphic installation spaces and evocations of the unconscious in Surrealist display—the white cube has remained the norm for presenting every variety of artistic expression.[34]

The visual purity of the white-cube gallery relates as well to the geometric abstraction of the 1920s and '30s frequently shown in such spaces, and often the form of an exhibition correlates with salient features of the art on display. For instance, when Kasimir Malevich introduced Suprematism at the 1915 exhibition "0.10: The Last Futurist Exhibition of Pictures," his paintings were dispersed on the walls in a way that reflected the asymmetrical balance and spatial dynamism of the forms within many of the works themselves. Classic Dada and Surrealist exhibitions made deeper connections in the matching of installation and artwork. The German Dadaist mockery of the fine art tradition was as well represented by "Early Dada Spring" ("Dada-Vorfrühling")—a 1920 exhibition in Cologne set in the courtyard of a beer hall and entered through a urinal—as it was by Max Ernst's wooden sculpture which he invited the public to destroy with an axe. And the political anger of Berlin Dada was as clearly conveyed by the form of "The First International Dada Fair" a few months later, with its cacophonous installation featuring posters screaming radical slogans and a mannequin of a German officer with the head of a pig hung from the ceiling, as it was by such works as Otto Dix's painting of men crippled in World War I, *45% Abledbodied*. The dreamlike and nightmarish installations created by Marcel Duchamp, André Breton, and their colleagues for the 1938 "Exposition Internationale du Surréalisme" evoke the imagery and emotional tone of many of the paintings and objects displayed, as well as that of Surrealist writing. And the biomorphism of Frederick Kiesler's 1942 design for Peggy Guggenheim's Surrealist Gallery at Art of This Century echoes the form and feeling of much of the work shown, as did his 1947 installations of the "Bloodflames" exhibition at New York's Hugo Gallery and the important Surrealist exhibition at Galerie Maeght in Paris.

Sometimes the relationship between exhibition spaces and the works in them is more conceptual than visual or emotional. In 1955 and 1956 the Japanese avant-garde Gutai group exhibited in a pine forest sculptural objects that emphasized their own materiality and a connection with nature. Conceptual art impresario Seth Siegelaub's show "January 5–31, 1969," which featured work deemed wholly noncommercial, was staged in an empty midtown Manhattan office, well outside the usual precincts of the New York art world. Siegelaub also proposed that an exhibition of Conceptual art could take the form of a catalog, since such artworks were ideas presented as effectively by documentation as by a physical installation. Here the very form of presentation is generated by reflecting on the kind of entity being displayed.[27]

Some installations do not so much reflect characteristics of the works as express an attitude toward them. At the 1937 exhibition "Degenerate Art," the Nazi disdain for modern art was demonstrated by surrounding works with racist and reactionary texts and by installing them with an unruliness indicating the disorder that they were said to breed. A less vicious example is Duchamp's installation in New York for the 1942 fund-raising exhibition "First Papers of Surrealism." Commentators variously interpreted the web of string with which Duchamp enveloped the entire display as representing the difficulty of understanding modern art, the current state of Surrealism as it wound old ideas back and forth, or the idea that these works were to be treasured like rare bottles of wine emerging from the cellar covered in cobwebs.

As these examples suggest, there is much to be learned by looking at exhibitions analytically, comparing shows from different times, and examining the role and form of particular exhibitions, and exhibitions in general, within the ongoing movement of art history. The two volumes of *Salon to Biennial: Exhibitions That Made Art History* are intended to provide material for such study, presenting both visual and written documentation with a minimum of interpretation. As a compendium of exhibition documentation, *Salon to Biennial* does not recount a single narrative; instead it offers a number of concepts to help illuminate the territory. One is the notion of the salon, understood broadly as a report on recent artistic production. Freed from its conservative use by the French Academy, the salon form has been employed throughout the history of advanced art to present and advocate for new developments, from the alternative Paris salons and great international exhibitions before World War I to the Documentas, biennials, and thematic museum surveys of the last third of the twentieth century. Another central area of investigation is the art-historical agency of major exhibitions, which not only introduce novel and important work but also delimit the artists and movements that become canonical, from "Manet and the Post-Impressionists" in 1910 to "Sensation" in 1997. Insights are to be gleaned as well from scrutinizing the installations themselves, examining the range of relationships between the art on display and the modes of its presentation.

One significant feature of many exhibitions in both volumes of *Salon to Biennial* is that they were organized by artists. With noteworthy exceptions, however, the incidence of such shows would wane after World War II, as public institutions and nonartist exhibition organizers came to dominate the display of the new. The increasing disempowerment of artists in directing the presentation of their work is part of the institutionalization of contemporary art. We might take the Whitechapel Gallery's 1956 exhibition "This Is Tomorrow," which was presented by an institution but conceived and mounted by the participants, to represent a tipping point. From this time on, instigation and control would move away from the artists, with even outside-the-box efforts—shows like "Chambres d'amis" (1986), in which artists installed works in private homes in Ghent, Belgium, and "Places with a Past" (1991), where artists worked with local communities in Charleston, South Carolina—being organized by professional curators. Details of such exhibitions, and of the increasing dominance of institutions of display and promotion, must await our second volume. For this installment of *Salon to Biennial*, it is the artists who are the primary forces.

Artists are central to these exhibitions not only as creators of the works and organizers of their presentation, but also as viewers. This generally is forgotten in all the attention that is paid to other members of the audience, from critics and collectors to the public whose strong reactions highlight accounts of so many well-known shows. Exhibitions are where artists confront work that prompts their future production, their responses combining in varying degrees emulation, rejection, creative departure, and the many anxieties of influence. Among the most important consequences of such exhibitions is the stimulation artists derive from what they see there; private responses complement public ones to yield historically significant developments. The documentation assembled in *Salon to Biennial* reminds us that these shows were events at which real people had new and transforming experiences, the kinds of experiences that will continue as long as works are assembled and enter the ongoing life of art through exhibition.

01

Exposition des Ouvrages non Admis
Salon des Refusés

Paris, 1863

LOCATION AND DATES

Salon Annexe, Palais de l'Industrie, avenue des Champs-Élysées, Paris, 15 May–c. 1 July 1863

ORGANIZER

Jury composed of members of the Academy of Fine Arts under the auspices of Napoleon III

ITINERARY

None

ARTISTS

Paul Achet, André Albrespy, Célestin Allard Cambray, Louis Allombert, Achille Alsbergh, Edward Ancourt, Auguste Andrieux, Félicie Audiat, Ferdinand Audry, Édouard-Alphonse Aufray, Estrenne Augé, Émile Avon, Victor Bachereau-Reverchon, Paul-Auguste Bailly, Gédéon Baril, Émile Bataille, Antony Bauger, Jean-Baptiste Baujault, Adolphe Baurens, Paul de Beaujeu, Léon Beaujoint, Joseph-Charles Beauverie, Georges Bellenger, A. Belloguet, Auguste-Sébastien Benard, Philippe Berger, Étienne Berne-Bellecour, Edmond Bernot, Bertraux, Amédée Besnus, Ferdinand Birotheau, Pierre-Joseph-Édouard Bisson, Victor-Gustave Bizot, Francis Blin, Hector Bloudel, Jules Blu, Louis-Charles Boquet, Henri-Charles-Emmanuel Bort, Auguste Bouchet, Louis-Alexandre Bouchet, Édouard Boubgrave, Victor Bouissard, Charles Boulanger, Hortense Bourgeois, Narcisse Bourgeois, Narcisse Bourgeon, Félix Bracquemond, Marcel Briguiboul, Vincent Brivet, Amélie Burdin, Jean-Jacques Buzelin, Alexandre-Joseph Cadolle, Adolphe-Félix Cals, Constant-Aimé-Marie Cap, Émile Cartier, Jean-Charles Casin, Eugène Cels, Paul Cézanne, Pierre-Jean Chapelier, Jean Chardon, Alfred Charpentier, Pierre-Édouard Charrier, P. Chartier, Gustave-Adolphe Chassevent, Emma Chaussat, Théophile Chauvel, Antoine Chintreuil, Charles Chipiez, C. Chrétien, A. Cinot, Paul Claparède, Georges Clavel, Jules-Auguste Cleff, Léon Clémans, Édouard Cléry, Gustave Colin, Maurice Cossmann, G. Costa, René Cottinet, E. Courtois, Charles Cousin, Couty, Louis-Amable Crapelet, Louis Crespelle, Henry Cros, Joseph Curiet, Édouard Curty, Aman Cyboulle, Célestin Dangny, Julie Dantes, Victor Darjou, Louise Darru, Élise Dausse, Élie Delaborde, E. Delabrière, Delalleau, Jules (Duval) Delaunay, Charles Delton, Henriette Denfigny (*née* Nolet), Denizart, Isidore-Laurent Deroy, Jean Desbrosses, Léopold Desbrosses, Moisson Desroches, Charles Dessienne, Lucie Destigny, Devers, Adrien Didier, Dietsh, Auguste Dion, Jean-Eugène Donezaud, Athon Donner, Armand Doré, G. Doyen, Hippolyte Dubois, Louis-Jean-Baptiste Dubois, Mathilde Duckert, Ernest-Joachim Dumax, Henry Dupray, P. Félix Dupuis, A. Duquenne, André Durand, Auguste Durand, Charles Durand, Marius Durst, Constant Dutilleux, Charles-Léon Duval, Éealard, Victor Eeckhout, Charles-Édouard Elmerich, Alphonse Fanchon, Henri Fantin-Latour, Émile-César Fauron, Albert Fautras, Jean-Marie Favergeon, Jeanne Favre, Amélie-Léonie Fayolle, Joséphine Fesser, Ficatie, Clara Filleul, Amanda Fougère, Alexandre Fournier, Pierre-Émile

cians that selected the Salon of 1863 was extremely severe, rcent of the works submitted for exhibition. Responding ons from artists whose work had been rejected, Emperor the Salon a week before it was to open in order to view nosen. Two days later he declared that the rejected works ther at the other end of the huge Palais de l'Industrie, l exhibition—if the artists agreed. Fearing the humiliation licly as second-rate, most of them declined to be included fusés."

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worthy exceptions, but for the most part, works in the pposing sides of the Palais de l'Industrie could have little effect. Nonetheless, the salon of rejected works uo in two ways: by reinforcing a growing popular le styles and genres, and—because of the emperor's blic judge the artists' works themselves, rather s verdict—by challenging the aesthetic authority of the ts. Reflecting the rising strength of the middle class ment of prevailing artistic institutions, the "Salon des e for the series of eight artist-organized Impressionist an a decade later.

Fournier, François Franzoni, Édouard Frémy, Henri Johnson Fusino, Claude Ferdinand Gaillard, Paul-Charles-Emmanuel Gallard Lepinzy, Paul-Césaire Gariot, Alphonse Gaudefroy, Hippolyte Gaultron, Amand Gautier, Alfred Gauvin, Adolphe-Louis-Victor Geoffroy, Charles Georget, Gustave-Adolphe Geymuller, Achille Gilbert, Charles-Camille Gilbert, Lazare Giraud, Jules Gouillet, Léon Goupil, Robert Graham, Granier de Beauregard, Charles-Louis Gratia, Gustave-Marie Greux, Pierre Grivolas, Armand Guillaumin, Nicolas-Désiré Guyon, Paul Hadol, Oscar de Haes, Charles Hamlet-Griffits, Léonide Hannequin, Antonio Hansmann, Mathilde Haous, Haquel, Henri Harpignies, Émile Hébert, Georges Hébert, Théodore Hébert, Hippolyte Heizler, Degray Henry, François Henry, Adrien-Auguste Herbert, Édouard Huber, Louis Hudel, Charles Iguel, Jean Jacottet, Louis Jacottet, Raphaël Jacquemin, Louis Jacquesson de La Chevreuse, Jean-Jacques Jeandon, Jeanneney, Jeanne-Louise-Adélaïde Johanneau, Johan Barthold Jongkind, Lucien Joulin, Louis Jouve, Rodolphe Julian, Frédérick Juncker, D. Gabrielle Keller, Victoire-Adèle Keuler, Bénédict-Ernest Kiez, Louis de Kock, Charles Laass d'Auguen, Jules-Louis Lacoste, Jean-Édouard Lacretelle, Éléonore de Ladvignière, Alphonse Lambert, Eugène Lambert, Marie Lamiral, Auguste Lamy, Lançon, Emmanuel Lansyer, Adèle de La Porte, Charles Lapostolet, Paul Lapret, Adine Las-Juinias, Auguste Laugier, Jean-Bonaventure Laurens, Jean-Paul Laurens, Félix Laurent, Eugène-Antoine-Samuel Lavielle, Louis-Guillaume Lebourg, Charles Lebrun, René Le Chenetier, Victor Le Chenetier, Léon Leclaire, Alexandre-Joseph-Hippolyte Leclerc, Émile Lecygne, Aglaé Lefebvre, Joseph Legendecker, Legrost, Alexandre Legrand, Alphonse Legros, Pierre-Frédéric Lehnert, Léonce Lelarge, A. Lemarchand, Paul Lemariée, Jules-Bertrand Lère, Célestin Leroux, Charles Levé, Jean-Baptiste Levis, Constant Linteio, Charles Litschauer, Édouard Lobjoy, Lohner, Léon Loire, Émile Loiseau, Louis Lombard, Marcel Longueville, Louis Loraux, L. Loustau, Marie-Euphrosine Loustau, Victor Loutrel, Victor Lovie, Victor de Luna, Marie Malcor (*née* Deherain), Malingré, J. Mallet, Jules Mamlet-Vernon, Édouard Manet, A. Marchand, Emmanuel Maris, Gaston Marquiset, Charles Martin, Marie-Emma-Georgette de Martonne, F. Mason, Alphonse Masson, Charles Matabon, Alexis Mathonat, Claude Maugey, Antoine Maurin, Jean-Pierre-Victor Mauriès, Sabine Mea, Louis-Théodore Mention, Frédéric Miallé, Alfred Michel, Jules Michel, Léon-Henri Michel, Jules Michelin, E. Mitaine, Gustave Mohler, Auguste Molénat, Molina, Francisque Monnet, Félix Morrel-Lamy, Auguste Morin, Sainte-Marie-Hardouin-Hippolyte Moulin, Louis Moullin, Alfred Moullion, Edmond Mulatin, Gustave Nassesky, Joseph Naviet, Jean-Baptiste Augustin Nemoz, Charles Niemhé, Hippolyte Noel, Décène-Honoré Olivier, Ernest-Hippolyte Onfroy, Marie Orwald, Léon-Auguste Ottin, Camille-Alfred Pabst, Paul-Horace Pagez, Victor-Émile Palin, Jules-Ernest Panis, Louis Paradis, É. Parmentier, Philippe Parrot, F. Pauly, Ernestine de Pelleport, Antoine-Jules Pelletier, François-Henri Perrer, Charles Pêtre, Adolphe Phalipon, Désiré Philippe, Pierdon, Nicolas-Constant Pierrat, Sobĕslav Hippolyt Pinkas, Charles Pipard, Camille Pissarro, Marie-François-Xavier-Louis de Planet, Charles John Berners Piestow, Auguste-Flavien Poitevin fils, Gustave Pomba, Portier, Jean-Jacques-Pierre Pradier, Julien Prévost, Henri de Lucienne Prosper, Amédée Proust, Clément Pruche, Rosalie Raimond, Thomas-Casimir Regnault, Ferdinand Rembert, Eugène Renouard, Revel, François Reverchon, Émilie Rigaud, Anne-Charlotte-Claudine Rodet, Rondé, Emma-Blanche Roslin, Henri Rousseau, François Royossart, Noggerath Rufina, Mina Saband, Apollonie Sabatier, Caroline Safand, Léon Saint-François, Charles-Edme Saint-Marcel, Paul-Émile Saint-Marcel fils, Salingre, Pierre Sallé, Philippe Sance, Hippolyte Sancy, Jules Sarrazin, L. Scheins, Joséphine Schiers, Jules Schitz, Charles-Adolphe Schneider, Léon-Ovide Scribe, Honorine Selim, Charles Sergent, G. de Serres, L. de Serres, Charles-Emmanuel Serret, Jules-Marie Sevestre, Charles-Hippolyte-Stéphen Simonin, Durand A. Simonin, Adrien-Joseph Simons, Sde Sivoli de Florence, Paul Spiekaert, Constantin-J. Stanchesco, David Sutter, François-Germain-Léopold Tabar, J. Tasse, Teller, Florent Tessier, Prosper Thiaucourt, Marie Thibault, Jean Maurice Thibon, Xavier Tichit, Charles Tillot, Louis Tournayre, Louis Tremblay, Trocard, Claudine Trouillon, Évariste de Valernes, Paul-Aimé Vallouy, Constance de Valmont, Henri de Vauréal, Paul Vayson, Hector Vergèses, Jules Vialle, Denis-Auguste Vizard, Charles-Louis Vielcazal, Eugène Villain, Eugène Villemin, Jules Villeneuve, Fernand de Villerose, Victor-Louis Vincelet, Louis-Maxime Virlouvet, Elisabeth Voiart, Antoine Vollon, Adolphe-André Wacquez, James McNeill Whistler, Baron Joseph de Widerkehr, Wild, Nicolas Xydias, René Zink, Émile Zipélius, Léon de Zychlinski

EXHIBITION CATALOG

Catalogue des ouvrages de peinture, sculpture, gravure, lithographie et architecture refusés par le jury de 1863 et exposés, par décision de S. M. l'Empereur, au Salon Annexe, Palais des Champs-Élysées, le 15 mai 1863
(Catalog of works of painting, sculpture, engraving, lithography and architecture refused by the jury of 1863 and exhibited, by the decision of H. M. the Emperor, at the Salon Annexe, Palais des Champs-Élysées). Preface by members of the jury. Paris: Les Beaux-Arts, Revue de l'Art Ancien et Moderne, 1863.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Number of artists: c. 410
Number of works: c. 1,500
Total attendance: unknown

The jury of Academicians that selected the Salon of 1863 was extremely severe, accepting only 30 percent of the works submitted for exhibition. Responding to vociferous objections from artists whose work had been rejected, Emperor Napoleon III visited the Salon a week before it was to open in order to view what had not been chosen. Two days later he declared that the rejected works would be shown together at the other end of the huge Palais de l'Industrie, apart from the official exhibition—if the artists agreed. Fearing the humiliation of being marked publicly as second-rate, most of them declined to be included in this "Salon des Refusés."

To justify their initial judgments, the official Salon jury placed what they considered to be the worst pieces in the most visible locations. James McNeill Whistler's *Dame blanche*—later called *Symphony in White No. 1: The White Girl*, 1862, which had been rejected for exhibition at London's Royal Academy the previous year, was hung so that it would be seen by all who entered the show. Édouard Manet's *Le bain*—later called *Luncheon on the Grass* (Le déjeuner sur l'herbe), 1863—was also featured. Despite the ridicule it received, which would be depicted in Émile Zola's 1886 novel *L'oeuvre*, such notoriety enormously increased Manet's reputation among young painters, and he came to be looked upon as a leader of independent, innovative artists.

There are noteworthy exceptions, but for the most part, works in the two exhibitions on opposing sides of the Palais de l'Industrie could have been exchanged with little effect. Nonetheless, the salon of rejected works attacked the status quo in two ways: by reinforcing a growing popular acceptance of multiple styles and genres, and—because of the emperor's mandate that the public judge the artists' works themselves, rather than accept the jury's verdict—by challenging the aesthetic authority of the Academy of Fine Arts. Reflecting the rising strength of the middle class and the disempowerment of prevailing artistic institutions, the "Salon des Refusés" set the stage for the series of eight artist-organized Impressionist exhibitions that began a decade later.

MINISTÈRE D'ÉTAT.

Palais des Champs-Élysées, le 1863.

SALON DE 1863.

MONSIEUR,

J'ai le regret de vous annoncer que les ouvrages présentés par vous à l'Exposition des Beaux-Arts de 1863, et enregistrés sous les N^os^ 1060, 1061 n'ont pas été admis par le Jury.

L'encombrement des magasins m'engage à vous inviter, dans l'intérêt de vos ouvrages, à vouloir bien les retirer sans délai; ils vous seront rendus sur la présentation de leurs récépissés, tous les jours, de dix heures à quatre heures, à dater du 1^er^ Mai.

Agréez, Monsieur, l'assurance de ma parfaite considération.

Le Directeur général des Musées Impériaux, Intendant des Beaux-Arts de la Maison de l'Empereur,

Comte de Nieuwerkerke

Tm. Gautier de Marigny Imp.r — 3444.

← On behalf of the jury, the Director General of Museums and Superintendent of Fine Arts under Napoleon III sent rejection letters to artists, including Henri Fantin-Latour, whose works (registered on this letter as nos. 1060 and 1061) had been denied admission to the official Salon. The two works submitted by Fantin-Latour to the official Salon were both included in the "Salon des Refusés."

→ Palais de l'Industrie, avenue des Champs-Élysées, Paris, c. 1860. The Palais de l'Industrie, also known as the Palais des Champs-Élysées, was built for the Universal Exposition of 1855. Subsequently, it housed the annual Salons, including the official Salon of 1863. Its counterpart, the "Salon des Refusés," opened in the building's annex on 15 May 1863, approximately two weeks after the official Salon. The "Salon des Refusés" received almost 7,000 visitors on the opening day.

CATALOGUE

DES OUVRAGES

DE

PEINTURE, SCULPTURE, GRAVURE

LITHOGRAPHIE ET ARCHITECTURE

REÇUS PAR LE JURY DE 1863

Et exposés, par décision de S. M. l'Empereur,

AU SALON ANNEXE

— PALAIS DES CHAMPS-ÉLYSÉES —

LE 15 MAI 1863

Prix : 75 cent.

PARIS

LES BEAUX-ARTS, REVUE DE L'ART ANCIEN ET MODERNE

RUE TAITBOUT, 19

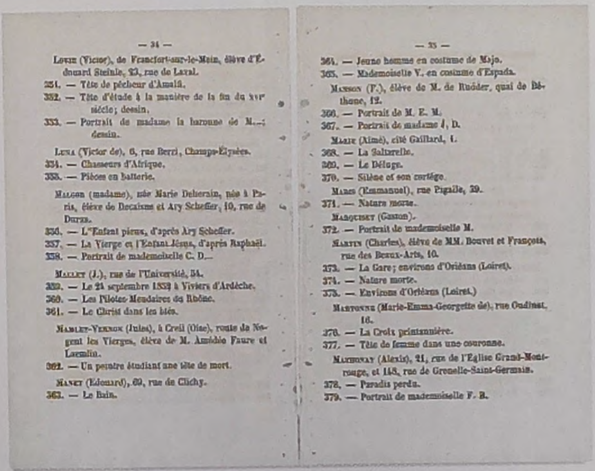
—

1863

↑ Cover of the catalog for the "Salon des Refusés," 1863. In addition to a short preface, the catalog reproduces Napoleon III's initial announcement (originally published in *Le Moniteur*) for the "Salon des Refusés." (Translations, p. 29.) The catalog, although prepared in haste, categorizes almost 800 works by medium, such as painting, sculpture, etchings, and architecture.

↗ The catalog includes an entry for Édouard Manet's *Luncheon on the Grass*, titled here *Le bain*, no. 363. Manet also exhibited *Young Man in the Costume of a Majo* and *Mademoiselle V. in the Costume of an Espada*, nos. 364 and 365.

→ The catalog included an entry for James McNeill Whistler's *Symphony in White No. 1: The White Girl*, titled here *Dame blanche*, no. 596.



— 34 —

LOUIS (Victor), de Francfort-sur-le-Main, élève d'Édouard Steinle, 23, rue de Laval.
351. — Tête de pêcheur d'Amalfi.
352. — Tête d'étude à la manière de la fin du XVI^e^ siècle; dessin.
353. — Portrait de madame la baronne de M...; dessin.

LUNA (Victor de), 6, rue Berri, Champs-Élysées.
354. — Chasseurs d'Afrique.
355. — Pièces en batterie.

MAISON (madame), née Marie Deherain, née à Paris, élève de Decaisne et Ary Scheffer; 10, rue de Dunes.
356. — L'Enfant pieux, d'après Ary Scheffer.
357. — La Vierge et l'Enfant Jésus, d'après Raphaël.
358. — Portrait de mademoiselle C. D....

MALLET (J.), rue de l'Université, 34.
359. — Le 24 septembre 1833 à Viviers d'Ardèche.
360. — Les Pilotes Mendaires du Rhône.
361. — Le Christ dans les liés.

MANET-VERNON (Jules), à Creil (Oise), route de Nogent les Vierges, élève de M. Amédée Faure et Lacmlin.
362. — Un peintre étudiant une tête de mort.

MANET (Édouard), 69, rue de Clichy.
363. — Le bain.

— 35 —

364. — Jeune homme en costume de Majo.
365. — Mademoiselle V. en costume d'Espada.

MASSON (F.), élève de M. de Rudder, quai de Béthune, 12.
366. — Portrait de M. E. M.
367. — Portrait de madame I. D.

MAZIÈ (Aimé), cité Gaillard, 1.
368. — La Saltarelle.
369. — Le Déluge.
370. — Sibère et son cortége.

MERS (Emmanuel), rue Pigalle, 39.
371. — Nature morte.

MARQUERET (Gaston).
372. — Portrait de mademoiselle M.

MARTIN (Charles), élève de MM. Bouvet et François, rue des Beaux-Arts, 10.
373. — La Gare; environs d'Orléans (Loiret).
374. — Nature morte.
375. — Environs d'Orléans (Loiret.)

MARYONNE (Marie-Emma-Georgette de), rue Ondinot, 16.
376. — La Croix printanière.
377. — Tête de femme dans une couronne.

MATHIEAY (Alexis), 21, rue de l'Église Grand-Montrouge, et 148, rue de Grenelle-Saint-Germain.
378. — Paradis perdu.
379. — Portrait de mademoiselle F. B.

— 34 —

VOLART (Mademoiselle Elisabeth).
388. — Portrait de l'auteur.
389. — Sainte Famille; aquarelle.

VOLLON (Antoine), 44, rue Durantin (Montmartre).
390. — Amazone.
391. — Portrait de M. S.
392. — Paysage (Charenton).

WACQUEZ (Adolphe-André), Barbizon, par Melun (Seine-et-Marne).
393. — La forêt par la neige.
394. — Relai de chasse au bouquet de l'Empereur; forêt de Fontainebleau.
395. — Chêne pris dans la vieille partie du bas Bréau.

WHISLER (James), chez M. Hardy, 4, rue Caumartin.
396. — Dame blanche.

XYOSSA (Nicolas), 22, rue Boissière, Passy.
397. — Célébrités grecques, composition grisaille.
398. — Costume d'Albano.
399. — Portrait de M. S.

ZUBE (René), élève de M. Paul Delaroche, 14, rue Sainte-Élisabeth du Temple.
400. — CINCINNATUS.

(Dès que Cincinnatus eut été nommé consul, le sénat dépêcha vers lui pour l'inviter à venir prendre possession de la magistrature. Il était alors occupé à labourer son champ; il conduisait lui-même la charrue, n'étant venu que depuis

— 35 —

les ruines jusqu'aux genoux, avec un bonnet qui lui couvrait la tête. Lorsqu'il vit venir les députés..., fort surpris..., il arrêta ses bœufs, un des envoyés s'avança....)

(Saillie, *Histoire romaine.*)

ZIPELIUS (Émile), né à Mulhouse (Haut-Rhin), élève de M. Léon Cogniet.
401. — Le Christ mort.
402. — Portrait.
403. — Portrait de madame G.; dessin.

ZYCHLINSKI (Léon de), élève de MM. Kietz, Flandrin, Couture; 10, rue Berthe, Montmartre.
404. — Portrait de M. B., homme de lettres.

A selection of paintings from the "Salon des Refusés":

← Édouard Manet
Young Man in the Costume of a Majo
[Jeune homme en costume de majo], 1863
Oil on canvas
74 × 49¼ in (188 × 124.8 cm)

↓ Johan Barthold Jongkind
Ruins of Rosemont Castle (Nièvre), 1861
Oil on canvas
13⅜ × 22½ in (34 × 56.5 cm)

↙ Henri Fantin-Latour
Display of Enchantment [La féerie], 1863
Oil on canvas
38¼ × 51¾ in (98.5 × 131.5 cm)

↓↓ Johan Barthold Jongkind
Ice Skaters in Holland [Patineurs en Hollande], 1863
Oil on canvas
34 × 45¼ in (86.5 × 115 cm)

↑ Édouard Manet
Luncheon on the Grass
[Le déjeuner sur l'herbe], 1863
Oil on canvas
81¾ × 104¼ in (208 × 264.5 cm)

→→ James McNeill Whistler
Symphony in White No. 1: The White Girl, 1862
Oil on canvas
83¾ × 42½ in (213 × 107.98 cm)

→ Édouard Manet
Mademoiselle V. in the Costume of an Espada
[Mademoiselle V. en costume d'Espada], 1862
Oil on canvas
65 × 50¼ in (165.1 × 127.6 cm)

↑ Firmin Gillot, "Salon de 1863: Les Refusés," *La Vie Parisienne*, 11 July 1863. In this caricature, Gillot renders several works shown at the "Salon des Refusés," including Édouard Manet's *Luncheon on the Grass* ((partial view, far left) and James McNeill Whistler's *Symphony in White No. 1: The White Girl* (bottom left).

— Mon fils! ôtez votre casquette! honneur au courage malheureux.

↑ Cham (Amédée Charles Henri de Noé), cartoon published in *Cham au Salon de 1863: Deuxième promenade*, Paris, 1863. Although Cham was well known for his caricatures of the official Salons, he also satirized the experience of viewing the "Salon des Refusés." The caption reads: "My son, remove your cap! Pay your respects to the failed attempt."

Announcement for the "Salon des Refusés"
Le Moniteur — Paris, 24 April 1863
—
The Emperor has received many complaints on the subject of the works of art that have been rejected by the exhibition jury. His Majesty, wishing to allow the public to be the judge of the legitimacy of these complaints, has decided that the works that were rejected should be exhibited in another part of the Palais de l'Industrie.

This exhibition will be optional, and artists who do not wish to take part have only to so inform the organizers, who will return their works to them promptly.

This exhibition will open on 15 May. Artists have until 7 May to withdraw their works. After that date, their paintings will be deemed not to have been withdrawn, and will be placed in the galleries.

Catalogue des Ouvrages de Peinture, Sculpture, Gravure, Lithographie et Architecture Refusés par le Jury de 1863 et Exposés, par Décision de S. M. l'Empereur, au Salon Annexe, Palais des Champs-Élysées, le 15 Mai 1863 [exh. cat.]
Preface
MEMBERS OF THE JURY
Paris, 1863
—
This catalog was compiled entirely independently of the book trade, through the efforts of the committee of artists rejected by the selection committee for the 1863 Salon, with no help from the organizers and on the basis of information gathered from many places, and in haste. Since a certain number of artists were no doubt unaware that it was being prepared, either because they were not in Paris or because the notices published in *Opinion Nationale*, *La Patrie*, *Le Temps*, *La Presse*, *Le Siècle*, *Le Moniteur des Arts*, etc., did not reach them, this catalog could not be made as complete as the Committee would have wished.

When it delivered the final page of this catalog to the printer, the Committee fulfilled its whole task, but having completed it, it feels the need to express the profound regret that it felt in noting the considerable number of artists who did not believe they ought to keep their works in the Anti-exhibition. Their nonparticipation is all the more regrettable in that it deprives the public and the critics of many of the works that would have been of great value, as much to reflect the thinking that inspired the Anti-exhibition as for the sake of the general edification provided by the perhaps unique experiment with which we are presented here.

Members of the Committee: Chintreuil, Jean Desbrosses, Desbrosses, P. Félix Dupuis, Frédérick Juncker, Lapostolet, Levé, Jules Pelletier
Paris, 14 May 1863

"L'Exposition des Refusés"
ÉDOUARD LOCKROY
Le Courrier Artistique — Paris, 16 May 1863
—
The Exhibition of the *refusés*, which we visited for a moment only, will certainly be a triumph for the jury; over fifteen hundred artists withdrew from the exhibition, many of whom were the best, of course. Among the canvases that remained, many would have found an honorable place in the rooms showing accepted works.

A painting by Mr. Briguiboul, placed near the door, appears to us, among others, deserving of high praise; there are few things, even on the other side of the Palais de l'Industrie, as powerfully modeled, or studied with as much love and knowledge; if the woman's form was a little more academic—more refined, if you will—there would be no question that this canvas would have been accepted by the jury. Mr. Briguiboul's talent has not yet reached its peak, but it will certainly grow, as it has been growing every year. Mr. Manet has a talent for displeasing the jury; if this were his only talent, then we would not be under any obligation to him. However, he has others. Mr. Manet has not yet said his last word. His paintings, whose qualities the public is unable to appreciate, are full of good intentions. One day, Mr. Manet will triumph—we have no doubt of that—over all the obstacles he meets, and we will be the first to applaud his success. Mr. Auguste Durand, one of whose canvases appears in the exhibition of accepted works, has left his best work for this one. It is the figure of a naked woman, and the drawing is elegant and pure. The woman's torso and legs are distinguished above all else due to Mr. Durand's excellent technique and use of color. We note also a landscape, truly charming, by Mr. Lansyer, a painter who has taken a little of his poetry from Corot. There are some landscapes by Mr. A. Lambert, a most remarkable sunset by Mr. L. de Serres, and a canvas full of feeling and of color, signed Étienne Bellecour. If the jury found reasons to refuse these paintings, they must certainly be bad. Mr. G. Colin, whom I almost forgot, has been able—in a work that at first glance is surprising in its singular combination of tones—to add a note of profound truthfulness to his work: the sky and the background are imbued with the warm rays of the southern sun. We will return to this, moreover, to speak of Mr. Blin, Mr. Harpignies, Mr. Lavielle, Mr. Wild and others.

"Beaux Arts: Salon de 1863. IV: Salon Annexe des Ouvrages d'Art Refusés par le Jury" [excerpt]
ERNEST CHESNEAU
Le Constitutionnel — Paris, 19 May 1863
—
In keeping with the spirit of contradiction characteristic of the French, some people assumed a knowing, expert air, others shook their heads or nodded in agreement, and some exclaimed in front of many of the paintings, "But how could that have been refused? Look, that's really not bad! The jury was too severe."

And in the crowd, wandering from one group of paintings to the next, one recognized the artists themselves who were the victims of this bully of a jury. They appeared anxious, troubled, the weakest of them sorely vexed and only the strongest showing some degree of serenity. Their little band, in which was revealed so much suppressed emotion and pain, so many disappointments and hopes, was by no means the least attractive scattered throughout this mass of unwittingly cruel visitors. These men suffered many blows struck by an indifferent hand, blows they felt deeply, but endured stoically! So much anguish in so short a space of time! May it have the salutary effect of strengthening the strong and of discouraging the weak vocation? . . .

The reader will forgive me for not seeking too ready a pretext for cheerfulness in a review of this exhibition in which there is so much horrible painting. Does not criticism owe it to itself to show compassion toward the deformities of art that are not contagious, as in life we shut our eyes to the deformities of those we love? We do not laugh at our sick friends, we care for them.

"Salon de 1863. IX. Les Refusés" [excerpt]
LOUIS LEROY
Le Charivari — Paris, 20 May 1863
–

The exhibition of works rejected by the jury is receiving almost as many visitors as its neighbor. The misbegotten child is competing with the legitimate daughter of the gentlemen of the Academy.

The rooms are well lit, allowing the work of these pariahs of the Salon to be examined in the best possible conditions.

The organizers have, with mischievous intent, placed some ludicrous canvases in the foreground, upon which the general public eagerly falls.

In acting this way, they perhaps complied with requests from the jury, who, if challenged in their turn, will have wished their justificatory pieces to be seen perfectly.

What we foresaw happening—that is to say, the display of some hideous items for which there is no name in any artistic language—has come about. Mr. Brivet's *Horses* [Les chevaux] and *Portrait of a Freemason Dignitary* [Portrait d'un dignitaire de la franc-maçonnerie] actually exceeded all our predictions in their unsightliness.

But what nobody expected, least of all the jury, was the effect created by certain paintings that their creators had the courage to submit.

Ah, gentlemen of the Academy, you have made the deplorable mistake of barring the way to Mr. Blin's *landscape* [paysage] and are you unwilling to pay the penalty for this iniquitous decision? That's unconscionable! Just listen to what the artists are saying about this canvas, and you will have a foretaste of the judgment that will be brought against you.

You have not even the excuse of the small size of its frame—no, because its size is such that it could not have escaped your attention. You saw it and you dared to reject it.

What are we to think? We are at a loss to find the grounds for such a verdict.

This painting, representing a line of tall apple trees disappearing into flat, open country, with the ground so well rendered, in such exact tones, with its pretty background and its delicate sky painted with delightful precision, is quite simply an excellent piece that would have undoubtedly attracted wide notice in the official salons. . . .

In conclusion, we say again that the step taken in favor of the *refusés* was excellent; for if the jury may defend itself by showing the innumerable monstrosities that people were not afraid to present to it, we may in turn judge it ourselves, and condemn it by pointing out the many denials of justice of which the jury is guilty.

The inexpert public will visit the *refusés* exhibition only to find things at which to jeer. What does that matter? But we challenge Mr. Hippolyte Flandrin, Mr. Meissonier, Mr. Léon Coignet, Mr. Brascassat, Mr. Robert-Fleury, and Mr. Eugène Delacroix to smile at Mr. Blin's landscape, at Mr. Jongkind's three paintings, not to mention twenty other paintings that are decidedly among the most serious.

Let us not forget to reproach certain artists of merit for the weakness that impelled them to withdraw their rejected works. This lack of solidarity with their colleagues might have compromised the outcome a generous measure, but, thanks to the courage of men of talent who were not afraid to have the ridiculous sit alongside them, we now know how the jury works, and they will agree that we have no reason to be grateful to them.

"L'Exposition des Refusés" [excerpt]
CHARLES BRUN
Le Courrier Artistique — Paris, 30 May 1863
–

The exhibition of the *refusés* could also be called the exhibition of comedians. What canvases! What works! What a collection! What a show! The good things—and they are few—are crushed by the bad. What am I saying? The bad! The appalling! The impossible! Never, indeed, were the words "side-splitting success" more richly deserved. The public, who pay only twenty *sols* at the door, get more than five francs' worth of entertainment. . . .

No, I believe nothing is more comical, nothing is more ludicrous, nothing is more ridiculous than these paintings, unless, of course, it is the crowd that laughs at them; nothing is more dreadful than to look at them, unless it's to see these good bourgeois folk convulsed with laughter, without really knowing why, and only because they have been told that these are paintings that have been rejected. How happy they are to make fun of the artists!! How proud they are of being ridiculous only at home, and of never having exhibited in public all the silly things that have passed through their heads! How thoroughly do they make these unfortunates (all too well known today) feel the superiority of fools of whom nobody has heard!

This Exhibition is certainly sad. It is always sad to see decent people making a mistake and blithely offering themselves to the boos of the multitude. Among them, as I have already said, are conscientious painters, even talented painters. What were they doing among this motley crew? They say the Emperor bought some of their paintings. That is doubtless an encouragement. But they will be none the less despised, none the less reviled—by the press, by their colleagues, by the multitude—and, worst of all, each of them, remembering the past, will say to himself, as with Molière's hero, "You brought it upon yourself, Georges Dandin! You brought it upon yourself!"

Letter to the editor
SIGNED "ONE OF THOSE ADMITTED"
Le Charivari — Paris, 6 June 1863
–

Dear Sir,

I am one of the 1,700 artists accepted by the 1863 Salon.

As such, I have been stuck in a corner where I do not see a single visitor in a week.

That, alas, is because my painting had nothing official about it, and depicted not a trace of a battle, not a single public employee.

By contrast, during that time, the public, who showed such disdain for my picture, which had been accepted, poured into the exhibition of those who were rejected.

Could you tell me whom I should approach in order to obtain my transfer from the hell of those admitted to the heaven of those excluded?

You would be doing me a service for which I should be eternally grateful to you.

"Salon de 1863. III. Les Refusés" [excerpt]
JULES CASTAGNARY
Le Courrier du Dimanche — Paris, 14 June 1863
–

We will not imitate those bourgeois who, in order to look knowledgeable, walk—solemn, upright and approvingly—through the salon of the artists who have been accepted, carrying with them their wives' and daughters' indiscriminate admiration for the most unspeakable daubs and the most widely recognized masterpieces, and who, once they have set foot in the salon of those rejected—again in order to look knowledgeable—give little leaps in the air, make loud expressions of surprise, and laugh heartily, all on the word of the jury.

We will enter the Salon des Refusés without exclaiming or laughing, in search not of foolish things—we know only too well that of all foolish productions, the most foolish yet is a bad painting—but works of merit.

Are there works of merit, then? Would you have doubted it? Are they worthy enough to appear in the official salon? Yes, with honor. Very few of them, in that case, you ask? What would you say if I suggested they were the majority? . . .

To the public: rest assured that if one were to withdraw from the Salon des Refusés two hundred ridiculous canvases which, in the absence of the Academy a mere office boy could have made, there would remain a very satisfying collection of paintings. I shall go further: in your mind's eye, place in the center of this remainder—the blatant rubbish having been removed—the hundred works by the thirty or forty artists whose names are on everybody's lips, and who are the pride of all exhibitions, because they are truly art's "high command," and you will straightway have a full Salon, as interesting as the one the organizers have devised.

To the Academy: gentlemen, this war must be given up. It is bad; it is discouraging. It is unjust; it exceeds your rights. When you called yourselves David and his school, when you had an aesthetic of your own, when this aesthetic, accepted by all, had in no way been shaken by being under the control of a freer system of thought, you could establish discipline in art with certainty; it was your duty to stifle rebellions, banish heretics. But the romantic school, by procuring the advent of individualism, signed the order for your dismissal. Today in art, each man is answerable only to himself and admits of no suzerainty but his own. Society has sanctioned this happy emancipation. As a governing power, you, the jury, now count for nothing. Therefore, generously give up your remaining authority, and resign yourselves to following a movement that you will henceforth be unable to stop.

"Lettres d'un Bourgeois de Paris" [excerpt]
ANONYMOUS [EUGÈNE DELACROIX]
Gazette de France — Paris, 21 July 1863
–

. . . But it is too easy to be amused at the expense of this chaotic jumble of works, and I even feel a certain shame at having remained among them so long. The public has seen hardly anything else, and how happy they were to be able, on this one occasion, to laugh at the expense of artists! How proud of themselves they were! How they took their revenge! In general, this anti-exhibition has achieved an aim diametrically opposed to the hopes that these little-known artists had of it: it has been the most dazzling, most compelling demonstration of the importance of the jury. The few incontrovertible errors the jury committed in carrying out its duties are an inherent part of human nature, and they are no more responsible than are the courts for judicial errors. Every judge in the world is capable of making a mistake, whether in dismissing Mr. Blin or Mr. Cazan, or Miss Lescuyer. These are accidents that can never be avoided absolutely, especially in matters of art, but when encountering them we must at least take all possible precautions.

While the advertisement for the exhibition makes no charges against the jury, it does seem to show the need for reform in the way in which it goes about its business. The jury should be given more time for scrutiny; its members should not be regularly allowed to absent themselves, leaving to two or three colleagues, sometimes even fewer, the fatigue of examining, alone, thousands of works, and the privilege—wide open to temptation—of pronouncing judgments based on personal taste, of making their trends prevail, and of inappropriately mixing the question of schools with that of craft, the only one submitted to their judgment.

Why not introduce a scrutiny in stages? Who would stand in the way of organizing second viewing sessions at which works that had been eliminated would be looked at again, in order to repair errors that had escaped at moments of inattention, fatigue or forgetfulness, but which could have such cruel consequences? Far from abolishing the jury, we must strengthen and consolidate it. . . .

Chapter V [excerpt]
ÉMILE ZOLA
L'Oeuvre — Paris, 1886
–

. . . Claude, whose spirits had revived amidst that martial odour, grew animated and pugnacious as he listened to the laughter of the public. He looked as defiant, indeed, as if he had heard bullets whizzing past him. Sufficiently discreet at the entrance of the galleries, the laughter became more boisterous, more unrestrained, as they advanced. In the third room the women ceased concealing their smiles behind their handkerchiefs, while the men openly held their sides the better to ease themselves. It was the contagious hilarity of people who had come to amuse themselves, and who were growing gradually excited, bursting out at a mere trifle, diverted as much by the good things as by the bad. Folks laughed less before Chaîne's Christ than before the back view of the nude woman, who seemed to them very comical indeed. The 'Lady in White' also stupefied people and drew them together; folks nudged each other and went into hysterics almost; there was always a grinning group in front of it. Each canvas thus had its particular kind of success; people hailed each other from a distance to point out something funny, and witticisms flew from mouth to mouth; to such a degree indeed that, as Claude entered the fourth gallery, lashed into fury by the tempest of laughter that was raging there as well, he all but slapped the face of an old lady whose chuckles exasperated him.

'What idiots!' he said, turning towards his friends. 'One feels inclined to throw a lot of masterpieces at their heads . . .'

Sandoz had become fiery also, and Fagerolles continued praising the most dreadful daubs, which only tended to increase the laughter, while Gagniere, at sea amid the hubbub, dragged on the delighted Irma, whose skirts somehow wound round the legs of all the men.

But of a sudden Jory stood before them. His fair handsome face absolutely beamed. He cut his way through the crowd, gesticulated, and exulted, as if over a personal victory. And the moment he perceived Claude, he shouted:

'Here you are at last! I have been looking for you this hour. A success, old fellow, oh! a success—'

'What success?'

'Why the success of your picture. Come, I must show it you. You'll see, it's stunning.'

Claude grew pale. A great joy choked him, while he pretended to receive the news with composure. Bongrand's words came back to him. He began to believe that he possessed genius.

'Hallo, how are you!' continued Jory, shaking hands with the others.

And, without more ado, he, Fagerolles and Gagnière surrounded Irma, who smiled on them in a good-natured way.

'Perhaps you'll tell us where the picture is,' said Sandoz, impatiently. 'Take us to it.'

Jory assumed the lead, followed by the band. They had to fight their way into the last gallery. But Claude, who brought up the rear, still heard the laughter that rose on the air, a swelling clamour, the roll of a tide near its full. And as he finally entered the room, he beheld a vast, swarming, closely packed crowd pressing eagerly in front of his picture. All the laughter arose, spread and ended there. And it was his picture that was being laughed at.

'Eh!' repeated Jory, triumphantly, 'there's a success for you.'

Gagnière, intimidated, as ashamed as if he himself had been slapped, muttered: 'Too much of a success—I should prefer something different.'

'What a fool you are,' replied Jory, in a burst of exalted conviction. 'That's what I call success. Does it matter a curse if they laugh? We have made our mark; to-morrow every paper will talk about us.'

'The idiots,' was all that Sandoz could gasp, choking with grief.

Fagerolles, disinterested and dignified like a family friend following a funeral procession, said nothing. Irma alone remained gay, thinking it all very funny. And, with a caressing gesture, she leant against the shoulder of the derided painter, and whispered softly in his ear: 'Don't fret, my boy. It's all humbug, be merry all the same.'

But Claude did not stir. An icy chill had come over him. For a moment his heart had almost ceased to beat, so cruel had been the disappointment. And with his eyes enlarged, attracted and fixed by a resistless force, he looked at his picture. He was surprised, and scarcely recognised it; it certainly was not such as it had seemed to be in his studio. It had grown yellow beneath the livid light of the linen screens; it seemed, moreover, to have become smaller, coarser and more laboured also; and whether it was the effect of the light in which it now hung, or the contrast of the works beside it, at all events he now at the first glance saw all its defects, after having remained blind to them, as it were, for months. With a few strokes of the brush he, in thought, altered the whole of it, deepened the distances, set a badly drawn limb right, and modified a tone. Decidedly, the gentleman in the velveteen jacket was worth nothing at all; he was altogether pasty and badly seated; the only really good bit of work about him was his hand. In the background the two little wrestlers—the fair and the dark one—had remained too sketchy, and lacked substance; they were amusing only to an artist's eye. But he was pleased with the trees, with the sunny glade; and the nude woman—the woman lying on the grass appeared to him superior to his own powers, as if some one else had painted her, and as if he had never yet beheld her in such resplendency of life.

He turned to Sandoz, and said simply:

'They do right to laugh; it's incomplete. Nevermind, the woman is all right! Bongrand was not hoaxing me.'

His friend wished to take him away, but he became obstinate, and drew nearer instead. Now that he had judged his work, he listened and looked at the crowd. The explosion continued—culminated in an ascending scale of mad laughter. No sooner had visitors crossed the threshold than he saw their jaws part, their eyes grow small, their entire faces expand; and he heard the tempestuous puffing of the fat men, the rusty grating jeers of the lean ones, amidst all the shrill, flute-like laughter of the women. Opposite him, against the hand-rails, some young fellows went into contortions, as if somebody had been tickling them. One lady had flung herself on a seat, stifling and trying to regain breath with her handkerchief over her mouth. Rumours of this picture, which was so very, very funny, must have been spreading, for there was a rush from the four corners of the Salon, bands of people arrived, jostling each other, and all eagerness to share the fun. 'Where is it?' 'Over there' 'Oh what a joke!' And the witticisms fell thicker than elsewhere. It was especially the subject that caused merriment; people failed to understand it, thought it insane, comical enough to make one ill with laughter. 'You see the lady feels too hot, while the gentleman has put on his velveteen jacket for fear of catching cold.' 'Not at all; she is already blue; the gentleman has pulled her out of a pond, and he is resting at a distance, holding his nose.' 'I tell you it's a young ladies' school out for a ramble. Look at the two playing at leap-frog.' 'Hallo! washing day; the flesh is blue; the trees are blue; he's dipped his picture in the blueing tub!'

Those who did not laugh flew into a rage: that bluish tinge, that novel rendering of light seemed an insult to them. Some old gentlemen shook their sticks. Was art to be outraged like this? One grave individual went away very wroth, saying to his wife that he did not like practical jokes. But another, a punctilious little man, having looked in the catalogue for the title of the work, in order to tell his daughter, read out the words, 'In the Open Air,' whereupon there came a formidable renewal of the clamour, hisses and shouts, and what not else besides. The title sped about; it was repeated, commented on. 'In the Open Air! ah, yes, the open air, the nude woman in the air, everything in the air, tra la la laire,' The affair was becoming a scandal. The crowd still increased. People's faces grew red with congestion in the growing heat. Each had the stupidly gaping mouth of the ignoramus who judges painting, and between them they indulged in all the asinine ideas, all the preposterous reflections, all the stupid spiteful jeers that the sight of an original work can possibly elicit from bourgeois imbecility.

At that moment, as a last blow, Claude beheld Dubuche reappear, dragging the Margaillans along. As soon as he came in front of the picture, the architect, ill at ease, overtaken by cowardly shame, wished to quicken his pace and lead his party further on, pretending that he saw neither the canvas nor his friends. But the contractor had already drawn himself up on his short, squat legs, and was staring at the picture, and asking aloud in his thick hoarse voice:

'I say, who's the blockhead that painted this?'

That good-natured bluster, that cry of a millionaire parvenu resuming the average opinion of the assembly, increased the general merriment; and he, flattered by his success, and tickled by the strange style of the painting, started laughing in his turn, so sonorously that he could be heard above all the others. This was the hallelujah, a final outburst of the great organ of opinion.

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From Émile Zola, His Masterpiece *(1902; reprint, Gloucester, England: Alan Sutton Publishing, 1986), 115, 117–18. Translation by Ernest Alfred Vizetelly.*

02

Première Exposition de la Société Anonyme Coopérative des Artistes-Peintres, Sculpteurs, Graveurs, etc. *The First Impressionist Exhibition*

Paris, 1874

LOCATION AND DATES
35, boulevard des Capucines, Paris, 15 April–15 May 1874

ORGANIZER
Société Anonyme Coopérative des Artistes-Peintres, Sculpteurs, Graveurs, etc. (Cooperative Association of Painters, Sculptors, Engravers, etc.)

ITINERARY
None

ARTISTS
Zacharie Astruc, Antoine-Ferdinand Attendu, Édouard Béliard, Eugène Boudin, Félix Bracquemond, Édouard Brandon, Pierre-Isidore Bureau, Adolphe-Félix Cals, Paul Cézanne, Gustave Colin, Louis Debras, Edgar Degas, Jean-Baptiste Guillaumin, Louis Latouche, Ludovic-Napoléon Lepic, Stanislas Lépine, Jean-Baptiste-Léopold Levert, Alfred Meyer, Auguste de Molins, Claude Monet, Berthe Morisot, Émilien Mulot-Durivage, Joseph de Nittis, Auguste-Louis-Marie Ottin, Léon-Auguste Ottin, Camille Pissarro, Pierre-Auguste Renoir, Léopold Robert, Stanislas-Henri Rouart, Alfred Sisley

EXHIBITION CATALOG
Première exposition, 1874 (First exhibition). Paris: Imprimerie Alcan-Levy, 1874.

hibitions, mounted in Paris from 1874 to 1886, constitute istorical model for the artist-organized group shows he life of advanced art until the 1960s. Organized by an l to make its members' work known to a growing market critics who informed them, the Impressionist exhibitions reasing number of shows created as alternatives to the ng Salon system.

nonyme presented its first exhibition in the recently well-known photographer Nadar (Gaspard-Félix w opened two weeks before the official Salon and then it. The more than two hundred works, displayed on d walls, included many pieces that we would not now ssionism. But there were close to sixty works by the core rs, and the exhibition included the painting that would s name, Claude Monet's view of Le Havre harbor, mpression, soleil levant], 1872. The exhibition provoked a tary, with more than fifty reviews and notices appearing ny of them positive.

st frequent objections to the Salon among artists was k was presented, particularly the notorious "skying" of acked with paintings. The hanging committee of The xhibition, led by Pierre-Auguste Renoir, employed a very t: paintings were hung spaciously in just two horizontal n were catching up with the British, who during the eliminated skying at Royal Academy exhibitions. Such n not only provided a more intimate view of the work, to the new private market, which had commercial nt from those of the Academic-government system that r-to-ceiling Salon installation. In the Impressionist ptuous private Parisian galleries of Georges Petit and he goal was to entice individuals to purchase paintings third Impressionist exhibition of 1877 made the t was mounted in a bourgeois apartment rented for the r Gustave Caillebotte.

Claude grew pale. A great joy choked him, while he pretended to receive the news with composure. Bongrand's words came back to him. He began to believe that he possessed genius.

'Hallo, how are you?' continued Jory, shaking hands with the others.

And, without more ado, he, Fagerolles and Gagniere surrounded Irma, who smiled on them in a good-natured way.

'Perhaps you'll tell us where the picture is,' said Sandoz, impatiently. 'Take us to it.'

Jory assumed the lead, followed by the band. They had to fight their way into the last gallery. But Claude, who brought up the rear, still heard the laughter that rose on the air, a swelling clamour, the roll of a tide near its full. And as he finally entered the room, he beheld a vast, swarming closely packed crowd pressing eagerly in front of his picture. All the laughter arose, spread, and ended there. And it was his picture that was being laughed at.

'Eh!' repeated Jory, triumphantly, 'there's a success for you.'

Gagniere, intimidated, as ashamed as if he himself had been slapped, muttered: 'Too much of a success—I should prefer something different.'

'What a fool you are,' replied Jory, in a burst of exalted conviction. 'That's what I call success. Does it matter a curse if they laugh? We have made our mark; to-morrow every paper will talk about us.'

'The idiots,' was all that Sandoz could gasp, choking with grief.

Fagerolles, disinterested and dignified like a family friend following a funeral procession, said nothing. Irma alone remained gay, thinking it all very funny. And, with a caressing gesture, she leant against the shoulder of the deridedl painter, and whispered softly in his ear: 'Don't fret, my boy. It's all humbug, be merry all the same.'

But Claude did not stir. An icy chill had come over him. For a moment his heart had almost ceased to beat, so cruel had been the disappointment. And with his eyes enlarged, attracted and fixed by a resistless force, he looked at his picture. He was surprised, and scarcely recognised it; it certainly was not such as it had seemedl to be in his studio. It had grown yellow beneath the livid light of the linen screens; it seemed, moreover, to have become smaller, coarser and more laboured also; andl whether it was the effect of the light in which it now hung, or the contrast of the works beside it, at all events saw all its defects, after them, as it were, for the brush he, in thoug deepened the distance right, and modified a t man in the velveteen j all, he was altogether only reallly good bit hand. In the backgrou the fair and the dark sketchy, and lacked su only to an artist's eye. trees, with the sunny an—the woman lying o superior to his own p had painted her, and a her in such resplender

He turned to San

'They do right to l er mind, the woman is hoaxing me.'

His friend wished came obstinate, and that he had judged looked at the crowd. culminated in an ascen No sooner had visitors he saw their jaws part, entire faces expand; a ous puffing of the fat of the lean ones, ami laughter of the women hand-rails, some youn tions, as if somebody h lady had flung herself to regain breath with mouth. Rumours of very, very funny, mus there was a rush fro Salon, bands of peopl er, and all eagerness to 'Over there.' 'Oh what fell thicker than elsew subject that caused m understand it, though to make one ill with feels too hot, while th velveteen jacket for fe all; she is already blue her out of a pond, and holding his nose.' 'I t

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Number of artists: c. 30

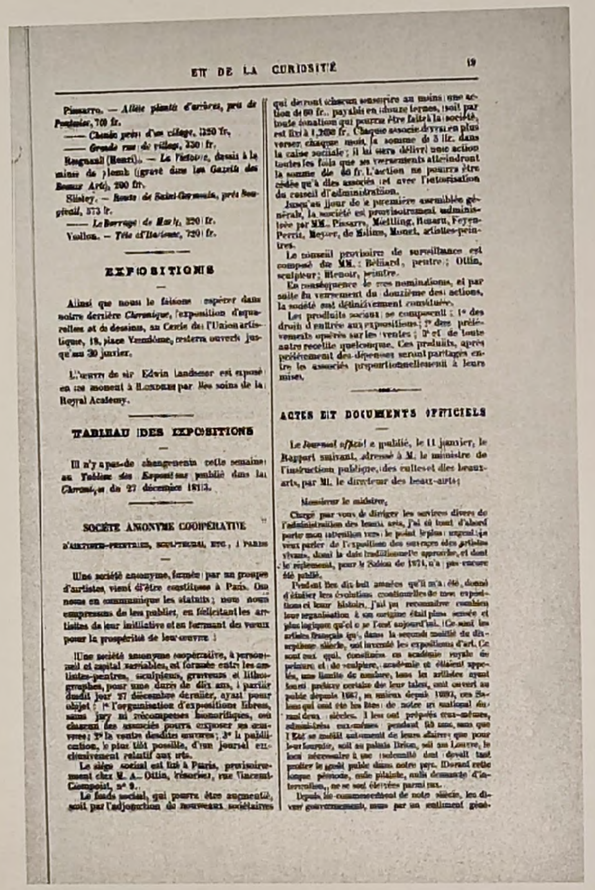
Number of works: c. 165

Total attendance: c. 3,500

The Impressionist exhibitions, mounted in Paris from 1874 to 1886, constitute the most important historical model for the artist-organized group shows that were central to the life of advanced art until the 1960s. Organized by an artists' society created to make its members' work known to a growing market of art buyers and the critics who informed them, the Impressionist exhibitions coincided with an increasing number of shows created as alternatives to the stultified long-running Salon system.

The Société Anonyme presented its first exhibition in the recently vacated studio of the well-known photographer Nadar (Gaspard-Félix Tournachon); the show opened two weeks before the official Salon and then ran concurrently with it. The more than two hundred works, displayed on reddish-brown flocked walls, included many pieces that we would not now associate with Impressionism. But there were close to sixty works by the core Impressionist painters, and the exhibition included the painting that would give Impressionism its name, Claude Monet's view of Le Havre harbor, *Impression, Sunrise* [Impression, soleil levant], 1872. The exhibition provoked a great deal of commentary, with more than fifty reviews and notices appearing in the Paris press, many of them positive.

Among the most frequent objections to the Salon among artists was how poorly their work was presented, particularly the notorious "skying" of pieces on tall walls stacked with paintings. The hanging committee of The First Impressionist Exhibition, led by Pierre-Auguste Renoir, employed a very different arrangement: paintings were hung spaciously in just two horizontal rows. Here the French were catching up with the British, who during the previous decade had eliminated skying at Royal Academy exhibitions. Such modes of presentation not only provided a more intimate view of the work, they also were critical to the new private market, which had commercial objectives very different from those of the Academic-government system that had spawned the floor-to-ceiling Salon installation. In the Impressionist shows—as in the sumptuous private Parisian galleries of Georges Petit and Paul Durand-Ruel—the goal was to entice individuals to purchase paintings for their homes. The third Impressionist exhibition of 1877 made the point perfectly clear: it was mounted in a bourgeois apartment rented for the occasion by the painter Gustave Caillebotte.



ET DE LA CURIOSITÉ 19

Pissarro. — *Allée plantée d'arbres, près de Pontoise*, 700 fr.

— *Chemin près d'un village*, 1250 fr.

— *Grande rue de village*, 320 fr.

Ranguault (Henri). — *Le Victoire*, dessin à la mine de plomb (gravé dans les *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*), 200 fr.

Sisley. — *Route de Saint-Germain, près Bougival*, 575 fr.

— *Le Barrage de Hampton-Court*, 320 fr.

Vuillon. — *Tête d'Indienne*, 720 fr.

EXPOSITIONS

Ainsi que nous le faisons espérer dans notre dernière *Chronique*, l'exposition d'aquarelles et de dessins, au Cercle de l'Union artistique, 18, place Vendôme, restera ouverte jusqu'au 30 janvier.

L'œuvre de sir Edwin Landseer est exposé en ce moment à Londres par les soins de la Royal Academy.

TABLEAU DES EXPOSITIONS

Il n'y a pas de changement cette semaine au Tableau des Expositions publié dans la *Chronique* du 27 décembre 1873.

SOCIÉTÉ ANONYME COOPÉRATIVE

D'ARTISTES-PEINTRES, SCULPTEURS, ETC., À PARIS

Une société anonyme, formée par un groupe d'artistes, vient d'être constituée à Paris. On nous en communique les statuts; nous nous empressons de les publier, en félicitant les artistes de leur initiative et en formant des vœux pour la prospérité de leur œuvre :

Une société anonyme coopérative, à personnel et capital variables, est formée entre les artistes-peintres, sculpteurs, graveurs et lithographes, pour une durée de dix ans, à partir dudit jour 27 décembre dernier, ayant pour objet : 1° l'organisation d'expositions libres, sans jury ni récompenses honorifiques, où chacun des associés pourra exposer ses œuvres; 2° la vente desdites œuvres; 3° la publication, le plus tôt possible, d'un journal exclusivement relatif aux arts.

Le siège social est fixé à Paris, provisoirement chez M. A. Ottin, trésorier, rue Vincent-Compoint, n° 9.

Le fonds social, qui pourra être augmenté, soit par l'adjonction de nouveaux sociétaires qui devront souscrire au moins une action de 60 fr., payable en douze termes, soit par toute donation qui pourra être faite à la société, est fixé à 1,200 fr. Chaque associé devra en plus verser chaque mois, à compte de 5 fr., dans la caisse sociale; il lui sera délivré une action toutes les fois que ses versements atteindront la somme de 60 fr. L'action ne pourra être cédée qu'à des associés ici avec l'autorisation du conseil d'administration.

Jusqu'au jour de la première assemblée générale, la société est provisoirement administrée par MM. Pissarro, Mettling, Rouart, Feyen-Perrin, Meyer, de Molins, Monet, artistes-peintres.

Le conseil provisoire de surveillance est composé de MM. : Béliard, peintre; Ottin, sculpteur; Renoir, peintre.

En conséquence de ces nominations, et par suite du versement du douzième des actions, la société est définitivement constituée.

Les produits sociaux ne comprennent : 1° des droits d'entrée aux expositions; 2° des prélèvements opérés sur les ventes; 3° et de toutes autres recettes quelconques. Ces produits, après préalablement des dépenses seront partagés entre les associés proportionnellement à leurs mises.

ACTES ET DOCUMENTS OFFICIELS

Le *Journal officiel* a publié, le 11 janvier, le Rapport suivant, adressé à M. le ministre de l'instruction publique, des cultes et des beaux-arts, par M. le directeur des beaux-arts :

Monsieur le ministre,

Chargé par vous de diriger les services divers de l'administration des beaux-arts, j'ai eu tout d'abord porter mon attention vers le point le plus important que veux parler de l'exposition des ouvrages des artistes vivants, dont la date indéfiniment approche, et dont le règlement, pour le Salon de 1874, n'a pas encore été publié.

Pendant les dix-huit années qu'il m'a été donné d'étudier les évolutions continuelles de nos expositions et leur histoire, j'ai pu reconnaître combien leur organisation à son origine était plus sensée et plus logique qu'elle n'est aujourd'hui. Ce sont les artistes français qui, dans la seconde moitié du dix-septième siècle, ont inventé les expositions d'art. Ce sont eux qui, constitués en académie royale de peinture, et de sculpture, académie qu'ils étaient appelés, une limite de nombre, tous les artistes ayant fourni pendant certains de leur talent, ont ouvert au public depuis 1667, au moins depuis 1699, ces Salons qui sont été les fêtes de notre art national durant deux siècles. Ils ont préparé eux-mêmes, administré eux-mêmes pendant 150 ans, sans que l'État se mêlât autrement de leurs affaires que pour leur fournir, soit au palais Royal, soit au Louvre, le local nécessaire à une solennité dont l'éveil tant profiter le goût public dans notre pays. Durant cette longue période, nulle plainte, nulle demande d'intervention, ne se sont élevées parmi eux.

Depuis le commencement de notre siècle, les divers gouvernements, sans par un sentiment géné-

↑ Announcement of the formation of the Société Anonyme Coopérative des Artistes-Peintres, Sculpteurs, Graveurs, etc. (left column, bottom). *La Chronique des Arts et de la Curiosité*, 17 January 1874. The Société Anonyme was an incorporated artists' collective, or association, presided over by a group of artists who would come to be known as the Impressionists, including Camille Pissarro, Claude Monet, Edgar Degas, and Pierre-Auguste Renoir. The announcement sets out the group's bylaws and aims, including the establishment of non-juried exhibitions and the sale of works from these exhibitions—a percentage of which would be allocated to the association. New members were required to purchase one share; as shareholders, all members were responsible for monthly dues. (Translation, p. 36.)

"Société Anonyme Coopérative d'Artistes-Peintres, Sculpteurs, etc., à Paris"

ANONYMOUS

La Chronique des Arts et de la Curiosité — Paris, 17 January 1874

An incorporated association formed by a group of artists has just been set up in Paris. Its bylaws have been passed on to us and we hasten to publish them, congratulating the artists on their initiative and wishing the venture all the best.

A incorporated collective with variable personnel and assets is hereby formed by painters, sculptors, engravers and lithographers for a period of ten years, as from 27 December last. Its aims are (1) the organization of nonselective exhibitions, with neither jury nor awards, at which each of the associates will be able to show his works; (2) the sales of the aforementioned works; (3) the publication, as soon as possible, of a newspaper devoted exclusively to the arts.

The head office is in Paris, provisionally at the home of the treasurer, Monsieur A. Ottin, 9, rue Vincent-Compoint.

Company funds, which can be increased either by the presence of new members, each of whom must acquire at least one 60-franc share, payable in twelve installments, or by any donations made to the association, are set at 1,200 francs. Each associate must make an additional monthly payment of five francs to the social security fund; a share will be delivered to him each time these payments add up to 60 francs. Shares may only be transferred to other associates, with the permission of the board of directors.

Until the holding of the first general meeting the association is provisionally administered by Messrs. Pissarro, Mettling, Rouart, Feyen-Perrin, Meyer, de Molins and Monet, painters.

The provisional supervisory board is made up of Messrs. Béliard, painter; Ottin, sculptor; Renoir, painter.

Consequent upon these nominations and the payment of one-twelfth of the shares, the association is definitively created.

Revenue will comprise: (1) exhibition admission fees; (2) commissions on sales; (3) all other revenue. After deduction of expenses these revenues will be shared among the associates in proportion to their contributions.

→ Studio of Nadar, 35, boulevard des Capucines, Paris, c. 1861. The First Impressionist Exhibition took place in 1874 in several large rooms on two floors. The building, dating to 1854, had been the studio of photographers Gustave Le Gray and the Bisson Brothers before being occupied by the caricaturist Nadar, who at the time was just beginning his photography career. Ever the publicist, he installed a sign in the form of his signature on the glass façade (center top). For the Impressionist exhibition, a democratic hanging system was employed: works were grouped by size, and a drawing of lots decided where each picture was hung.

A selection of paintings from
The First Impressionist Exhibition:

↞ Paul Cézanne
The House of the Hanged Man
[La maison du pendu], c. 1873
Oil on canvas
21⅜ × 26 in (55 × 66 cm)

← Paul Cézanne
Modern Olympia
[Une moderne Olympia], 1873–74
Oil on canvas
18⅛ × 21⅝ in (46 × 55 cm)

↙ Berthe Morisot
Hide and Seek [Cache-cache], 1873
Oil on canvas
17¾ × 21⅝ in (45 × 55 cm)

↙↙ Edgar Degas
Dance Rehearsal
[Répétition d'un ballet sur la scène], 1874
Oil on canvas
25⅝ × 31¾ in (65 × 81 cm)

↓ Pierre-Auguste Renoir
The Theater Box [La loge], 1874
Oil on canvas
31½ × 25 in (80 × 63.5 cm)

→ Claude Monet
Impression, Sunrise
[Impression, soleil levant], 1872
Oil on canvas
18⅞ × 24¾ in (48 × 63 cm)
Critic Louis Leroy first coined the term "Impressionism" when describing this work by Monet in his unfavorable review of the show. (Translation, p. 42.)

↘ Claude Monet
Boulevard des Capucines, 1873–74
Oil on canvas
31¾ × 23¾ in (80.3 × 60.3 cm)
Monet created two paintings of the view from Nadar's studio of the boulevard des Capucines. It is not known for certain which one was included in the exhibition.

→→ Berthe Morisot
The Cradle [Le berceau], 1872
Oil on canvas
22 × 18 in (56 × 46 cm)

↓ Camille Pissarro
Hoarfrost [Gelée blanche], 1873
Oil on canvas
25¾ × 36⅞ in (65 × 93 cm)

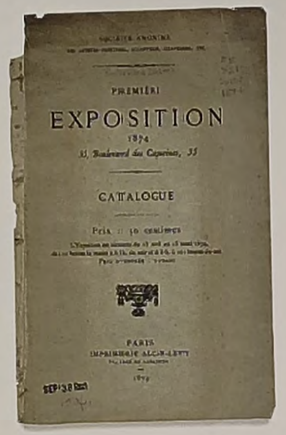
↘↘ Alfred Sisley
The Flood
[Le Bac de l'Île de la Loge
—inondation], 1872
Oil on canvas
17¾ × 23⅝ in (45 × 60 cm)

↓ Cover of the catalog for The First Impressionist Exhibition, 1874. The catalog was edited by Edmond Renoir, the brother of Pierre-Auguste. The cover indicates the opening hours of the exhibition, from 10 A.M. to 6 P.M., and an additional two hours, from 8 P.M. to 10 P.M.

↘ The catalog included entries for three works by Paul Cézanne, nos. 42–44: Cézanne's *Modern Olympia*, no. 43, was lent by the collector Dr. Paull Gachet, a physician whose patients included several Impressionist artists.

↓↓ Catalog entries for works by Claude Monet, nos. 95–103, and by Berthe Morisot, nos. 104–112 (her entries continue on page 16 of the catalog). Monet's entry no. 98 is listed as "*Impression, Soleil levant*" (now known as *Impression, Sunrise*)—the work that first inspired the term "impressionist."

↘↘ The last page of the catalog provided details on how the art could be purchased: "For all inquiries and for the sale of exhibited works: at the exhibition itself, 35, boulevard des Capucines (first floor), from 10 o'clock in the morning until 10 o'clock in the evening." Artist-members of the Société Anonyme took the unprecedented step of selling their own works, bypassing the Salon system.


SOCIÉTÉ ANONYME
DES ARTISTES-PEINTRES, SCULPTEURS, GRAVEURS, ETC.

PREMIÈRE

EXPOSITION

1874

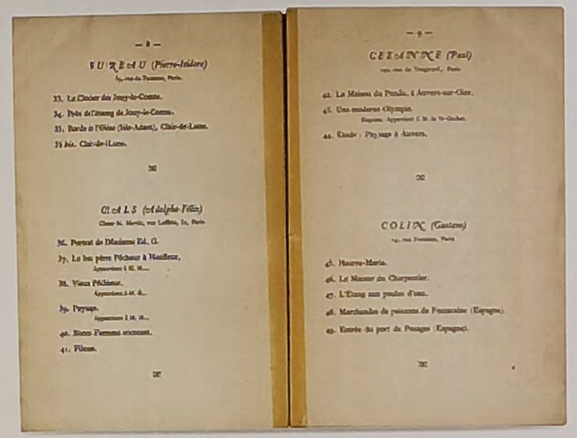
35, Boulevard des Capucines, 35

CATALOGUE

PRIX : 50 CENTIMES

PARIS
IMPRIMERIE ALCAN-LÉVY

1874


— 8 —

BUREAU (Pierre-Isidore)

33. Le Cimetière de Jouy-le-Comte.
34. Près de l'étang de Jouy-le-Comte.
35. Bords de l'Oise (Isle-Adam), Chiri-de-Lame.
35 bis. Chiri-de-Lame.

2f

CALS (Adolphe-Félix)

36. Portrait de Madame Ed. G.
37. Le bon père Pêcheur à Honfleur, Appartient à M. M...
38. Vieux Pêcheur. Appartient à M. B...
39. Paysage. Appartient à M. M...
40. Bien Fermera sûrement.
41. Fûtes.

2f

— 9 —

CEZANNE (Paul)

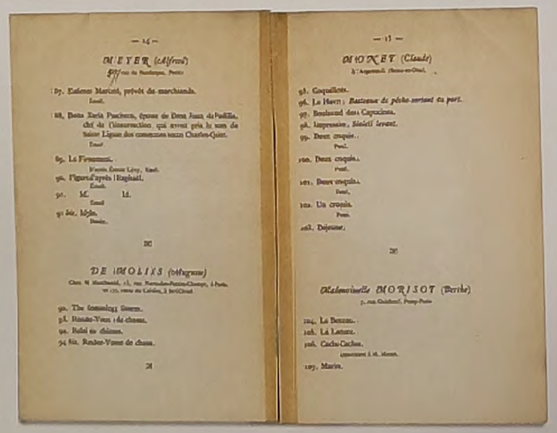
42. La Maison du Pendu, à Auvers-sur-Oise.
43. Une moderne Olympia. Esquisse. Appartient à M. le Dr Gachet.
44. Étude : Paysage à Auvers.

2f

COLIN (Gustave)

45. Heures-Marie.
46. Le Maître du Charpentier.
47. L'Étang aux poules d'eau.
48. Marchandes de poissons de Fontarabie (Espagne).
49. Entrée du port de Pasages (Espagne).

2f


— 14 —

MEYER (Alfred)

Pr. Enlevez Mariété, prévôt du marchands.
Essai.
88. Berta Ilaria Pinchetti, épouse de Dem Jean du Fadilla, chef du Commandant, qui servait près le nom de Saint Lépin des commandes sous Charles-Quint.
Essai
89. La Fiancée.
Portrait Ernest Lévy. Essai.
90. Figure d'après Raphaël.
Essai.
91. M. Id.
Essai
91 bis. Idem.
Essai.

2f

DE MOLINS (Othegrave)

Chez M. Martinet, 18, rue Notre-Dame-des-Champs, à Paris.
92 bis, rue de Calais, à Batignolles

92. The Seasons, Groups.
93. Bonne-Vues : la chasse.
94. Relai de chiens.
94 bis. Rendez-Vous de chasse.

2f

— 15 —

MONET (Claude)

à Argenteuil (Seine-et-Oise).

95. Coquillotte.
96. Le Havre : Entrance de pêche sortant du port.
97. Boulevard des Capucines.
98. Impression, Soleil levant.
99. Deux croquis.
Pour.
100. Deux croquis.
Pour.
101. Deux croquis.
Pour.
102. Un croquis.
Pour.
103. Déjeuner.

2f

Mademoiselle MORISOT (Berthe)

5, rue Guichard, Passy-Paris

104. La Berceuse.
105. La Lecture.
106. Cache-Cache.
appartient à M. Manet.
107. Marine.

S'adresser
POUR TOUS LES RENSEIGNEMENTS
ET LA VENTE DES OEUVRES EXPOSÉES,
au siège même de l'Exposition, 35, Boulevard des Capucines (1er premier), de 10 heures du matin à 10 heures du soir.

"Chronique; Beaux-Arts: Expositions de Peintures Modernes"
[excerpt]
E.C.
Revue de France — Paris, April 1874
–

. . . Such is not the case for the exhibition at 35, rue des Capucines, organized by a "Société Anonyme of painters, sculptors and printmakers."

Must I say it? All right, here goes: except for a few pictures that one is astonished to find in such a setting and that have absolutely no place there at all—by Boudin, Brandon, Gustave Colin, Lépine, de Molins, de Nittis—the entire set of works brought together by the Société Anonyme would have met with an indignant refusal from the official Salon jury. Here the jury, with its record of who knows how many blunders and injustices, would have been in its element.

The core of the Société Anonyme is a group of audacious young painters whose aesthetic and ambitions are highly personal. They want to paint what they see—strictly what they can see and strictly as they see it. If on the one hand they outlaw imagination, in which they are wrong, on the other they outlaw convention, in which they are right.

The important thing now is to understand their way of seeing and decide whether or not their technical resources are adequate.

They see accurately, and clearly, but from too far away. They settle for the general, for shifting shapes, and are too disdainful of detail; and I suspect that this disdain is less a statement of principle than a gap in their education.

Despite the bewilderment of the honest art lovers who venture into the exhibition, I would, if I had the necessary space here today, willingly go deeper into these trends and modes of expression, strange as they may be at first sight. With a little luck I shall be able to come back to them, but for the moment, with a view to getting the public used to this style of painting via transitions that are not too violent, I suggest that the visitor limit himself to *At the Races in the Countryside* [Aux courses en province] and *Backstage* [Intérieur de coulisse] by Mr. Degas, *Poppies* [Coquelicots] and *The Picnic* [Le déjeuner] by Mr. Monet, *The Cradle* [Le berceau] by Miss Morisot, *Breeze over the Harvest* [Brise sur les moissons] by Mr. Pissarro, *Dancer* [Danseuse] and *Before the Show* [Avant-scène (also known as *The Theater Box* [La loge])] by Mr. Renoir, *Bird Hunting* [Levée d'étang] by Mr. Rouart, *The Seine in Port-Marly* [La Seine à Port-Marly] by Mr. Sisley, and *Japanese Dolls* [Poupées japonaises] and *The Pond of Saint-Josse-Ten-Noode* [L'Étang de Saint-Josse-Ten-Noode] by Mr. Zacharie Astruc.

There are also accompanying works, by the same artists and others, that have a provocative air and annoy non-philosophical visitors the way a red rag annoys a bull.

What can be done about this? Systematically excluded from the official exhibitions they have now given up trying to gain access to, the artists haven't been able to resist a few childish pranks now that, for the first time, the pleasure of exhibiting is theirs.

Let's tell them that we take them seriously; let's be indulgent with their peccadilloes; and you'll see these children become well-behaved adults.

"Lettres de Paris" [excerpt]
ÉMILE ZOLA
Le Sémaphore de Marseille — Marseille, 18 April 1874
–

The Salons are taking shape and the theaters are trying to organize the next summer season. There remains only the opening of the Exhibition of Painting before one leaves Paris. The exhibition is the last social and artistic formality. But while waiting for the official Salon to open on 1 May, I must notify you of an admirable venture undertaken by a group of thirty artists, who have formed a cooperative company for the exhibition and sale of their works. Their carefully prepared bylaws are too complex for me to go into here, but one can already form a judgment of the company, as it has just opened its first exhibition on Nadar's premises on boulevard des Capucines. I've just come from the exhibition and can only applaud the welcome daring of these painters and sculptors who, without seeking to protest against the regular Salon, decided that they only had to come to an understanding in order to make themselves known to the public and establish a direct relationship with buyers. Among the canvases that really struck me, I should like to point out in particular a most remarkable landscape by one of your compatriots, Mr. Paul Cézanne, from Aix-en-Provence, who displays great originality. Mr. Paul Cézanne's struggle has been a long one and he has the true temperament of a great painter. I should also like to single out *Studies of Dancers* [Études de danseuses] by Mr. Degas; landscapes by Messrs. Pissarro, Monet, Béliard and Sisley; and lastly various very interesting works by Miss Morisot and Messrs. Renoir, Bracquemond, Colin and Boudin. Good luck to these young people! . . .

"L'Exposition du Boulevard des Capucines"
[excerpt]
E. DRUMONT
Le Petit Journal — Paris, 19 April 1874
–

Yesterday the free exhibition organized by a small group of artists opened at 35, boulevard des Capucines, and I'm too fond of freedom not to greet the venture with sincere applause.

It was not the intention of the participating artists to protest the jury's decisions. They opened their exhibition a few days ahead of the Salon so as to scotch all suspicions in this regard.

For to invoke the judgment of a court is to recognize that court, while the members of this group want the direct judgment of the public, without the mediation of any court whatsoever. They are putting into practice the most accurate definition of freedom I have ever read—"To be free is to be the master"—and they mean to be the masters—master painters—on their own ground. A man's home is his castle.

Their castle is handsome and admirably lit, set amid the hurly-burly of a Paris boulevard, and open to all. And it will certainly be visited by all those who have an hour to spare—or rather to gain—in Paris.

As proof that the visit is truly worthwhile, one has only to name the main artists exhibiting: Messrs. Zacharie Astruc, Attendu, Béliard, Bracquemond, Brandon, Boudin, Bureau, Cals, Cézanne, Gustave Colin, Debras, Degas, Guillaumin, Latouche, Lepic, Lépine, Levert, Meyer, de Molins, Monet, Miss Berthe Morisot, and Messrs. Mulot-Durivage, de Nittis, Auguste-Louis-Marie Ottin, Léon Ottin, Pissarro, Renoir, Robert, Rouart, and Sisley.

The boulevard des Capucines exhibition is particularly interesting from another point of view, too: it represents not a school—on the contrary, each exhibitor appears out to exaggerate his

own individuality—but rather a highly significant shared tendency.

The visitor coming in off the street during the day or in the evening—the exhibition is open until six o'clock—will certainly not have the impression of entering what is so solemnly termed the temple of art. Indeed he will find the same life there as he has just left behind outdoors: the constant succession of urban sights and even the things he sees when he happens to glance around him in the country. . . .

This venture is the beginning of wisdom and a tryout for a new system that, by freeing the state from the tutelage of artists and artists from the tutelage of the state, gives each party its freedom—by which I mean full ownership of oneself and full possession of one's strengths.

"L'Exposition des Impressionnistes"

LOUIS LEROY

Le Charivari — Paris, 25 April 1874

–

Oh, it was indeed a strenuous day . . . when I ventured into the first exhibition on the boulevard des Capucines in the company of M. Joseph Vincent, landscape painter, pupil of [the academic master] Bertin, recipient of medals and decorations under several governments! The rash man had come there without suspecting anything; he thought that he would see the kind of painting one sees everywhere, good and bad, rather bad than good, but not hostile to good artistic manners, devotion to form, and respect for the masters. Oh, form! Oh, the masters! We don't want them any more, my poor fellow! We've changed all that.

Upon entering the first room, Joseph Vincent received an initial shock in front of the *Dancer* by M. Renoir.

"What a pity," he said to me, "that the painter, who has a certain understanding of color, doesn't draw better; his dancer's legs are as cottony as the gauze of her skirts."

"I find you hard on him," I replied. "On the contrary, the drawing is very tight."

Bertin's pupil, believing that I was being ironical, contented himself with shrugging his shoulders, not taking the trouble to answer. Then, very quietly, with my most naïve air, I led him before the *Ploughed Field* of M. Pissarro. At the sight of this astounding landscape, the good man thought that the lenses of his spectacles were dirty. He wiped them carefully and replaced them on his nose.

"By Michalon!" he cried. "What on earth is that?"

"You see . . . a hoarfrost on deeply ploughed furrows."

"Those furrows? That frost? But they are palette-scrapings placed uniformly on a dirty canvas. It has neither head nor tail, top nor bottom, front nor back."

"Perhaps . . . but the impression is there."

"Well, it's a funny impression! Oh . . . and this?"

"*An Orchard* by M. Sisley. I'd like to point out the small trees on the right; it's gay, but the impression . . . "

"Leave me alone, now, with your impression . . . it's neither here nor there. But here we have a *View of Melun* by M. Rouart, in which there's something to the water. The shadow in the foreground, for instance, is really peculiar."

"It's the vibration of tone which astonishes you."

"Call it sloppiness of tone and I'd understand you better—Oh, Corot, Corot, what crimes are committed in your name! It was you who brought into fashion this messy composition, these thin washes, these mud-splashes in front of which the art lover has been rebelling for thirty years and which he has accepted only because constrained and forced to it by your tranquil stubbornness. Once again, a drop of water has worn away the stone!"

The poor man rambled on this way quite peacefully, and nothing led me to anticipate the unfortunate accident which was to be the result of his visit to this hair-raising exhibition. He even sustained, without major injury, viewing the *Fishing Boats Leaving the Harbor* by M. Claude Monet, perhaps because I tore him away from dangerous contemplation of this work before the small, noxious figures in the foreground could produce their effect.

Unfortunately, I was imprudent enough to leave him too long in front of the *Boulevard des Capucines*, by the same painter.

"Ah-ha!" he sneered in Mephistophelian manner. "Is that brilliant enough, now! There's impression, or I don't know what it means. Only, be so good as to tell me what those innumerable black tongue-lickings in the lower part of the picture represent?"

"Why, those are people walking along," I replied.

"Then do I look like that when I'm walking along the boulevard des Capucines? Blood and thunder! So you're making fun of me at last?"

"I assure you, M. Vincent . . . "

"But those spots were obtained by the same method as that used to imitate marble—a bit here, a bit there, slapdash, any old way. It's unheard of, appalling! I'll get a stroke from it, for sure."

I attempted to calm him by showing him the *St. Denis Canal* by M. Lépine and the *Butte Montmartre* by M. Ottin, both quite delicate in tone; but fate was strongest of all: the *Cabbages* of M. Pissarro stopped him as he was passing by and from red he became scarlet.

"Those are cabbages," I told him in a gently persuasive voice.

"Oh, the poor wretches, aren't they caricatured! I swear not to eat any more as long as I live!"

"Yet it's not their fault if the painter . . . "

"Be quiet, or I'll do something terrible."

Suddenly he gave a loud cry upon catching sight of the *Maison du pendu* by M. Paul Cézanne. The stupendous impasto of this little jewel accomplished the work begun by the *Boulevard des Capucines*; *père* Vincent became delirious.

At first his madness was fairly mild. Taking the point of view of the impressionists, he let himself go along their lines: "Boudin has some talent," he remarked to me before a beach scene by that artist; "but why does he fiddle so with his marines?"

"Oh, you consider his painting too finished?"

"Unquestionably. Now take Mlle Morisot! That young lady is not interested in reproducing trifling details. When she has a hand to paint, she makes exactly as many brushstrokes lengthwise as there are fingers, and the business is done. Stupid people who are finicky about the drawing of a hand don't understand a thing about impressionism, and great Manet would chase them out of his republic."

"Then M. Renoir is following the proper path; there is nothing superfluous in his *Harvesters*. I might almost say that his figures . . . "

". . . are even too finished."

"Oh, M. Vincent! But do look at those three strips of color, which are supposed to represent a man in the midst of the wheat!"

"There are two too many; one would be enough."

I glanced at Bertin's pupil; his countenance was turning a deep red. A catastrophe seemed to me imminent, and it was reserved to M. Monet to contribute the last straw.

"Ah, there he is, there he is!" he cried, in front of No. 98. "I recognize him, papa Vincent's favorite! What does that canvas depict? Look at the catalogue."

"*Impression, Sunrise*."

"*Impression*—I was certain of it. I was just telling myself that, since I was impressed, there had to be some impression in it . . . and what freedom, what ease of workmanship! Wallpaper in its embryonic state is more finished than that seascape."

In vain I sought to revive his expiring reason . . . but the horrible fascinated him. *The Laundress*, so badly laundered, of M. Degas drove him to cries of admiration. Sisley himself appeared to him affected and precious. To indulge his insanity and out of fear of irritating him, I looked for what was tolerable among the impressionist pictures, and I acknowledged without too much difficulty that the bread, grapes, and chair of *Breakfast*, by M. Monet, were good bits of painting. But he rejected these concessions.

"No, no!" he cried. "Monet is weakening there. He is sacrificing to the false gods of Meissonier. Too finished, too finished! Talk to me of the *Modern Olympia*! That's something well done."

Alas, go and look at it! A woman folded in two from whom a Negro girl is removing the last veil in order to offer her in all her ugliness to the charmed gaze of a brown puppet. Do you remember the *Olympia* of M. Manet? Well, that was a masterpiece of drawing, accuracy, finish, compared with the one by M. Cézanne.

Finally, the pitcher ran over. The classic skull of *père* Vincent, assailed from too many sides, went completely to pieces. He paused before the municipal guard who watches over all these treasures and, taking him to be a portrait, began for my benefit a very emphatic criticism.

"Is he ugly enough?" he remarked, shrugging his shoulders. "From the front, he has two eyes . . . and a nose . . . and a mouth! Impressionists wouldn't have thus sacrificed to detail. With what the painter has expended on the way of useless things, Monet would have done twenty municipal guards!"

"Keep moving, will you!" said the "portrait."

"You hear him—he even talks! The poor fool who daubed at him must have spent a lot of time at it!"

And in order to give the appropriate seriousness to his theory of aesthetics, *père* Vincent began to dance the scalp dance in front of the bewildered guard, crying in a strangled voice: "Hi-ho! I am impression on the march, the avenging palette knife, the *Boulevard des Capucines* of Monet, the *Maison du pendu* and the *Modern Olympia* of Cézanne. Hi-ho! Hi-ho!"

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From John Rewald, The History of Impressionism *(New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1946), 256–62. Translation by John Rewald.*

"Avant le Salon" [excerpt]

ÉMILE CARDON

La Presse — Paris, 28 April 1874

–

. . . This is a great chance: the exhibition on the boulevard des Capucines is another newsworthy event that lovers of the farcical and the grotesque won't want to miss.

The new art has taken refuge in Nadar's studio on the boulevard des Capucines. And not after being turned down by the Salon jury, but before: its practitioners disdainfully refuse to submit to the judgment of those who, they say, could neither understand nor evaluate their works, or would admit them only out of pity.

I can't criticize this independence and—I say this sincerely—this private exhibition is a venture that deserves our approval: it clearly represents a new path for those who feel that if art is to develop, it needs more freedom than officialdom is ready to grant it. But while I have no qualms about applauding the exhibition's organizers, the same cannot be said when it comes to commenting on the works on show—which I shall do tomorrow. . . .

⚓ Paul Hadol, "The Comical Week, by Hadol," *L'Éclipse*, 26 April 1874. This series of cartoons satirizing the events of the week includes one pertaining to The First Impressionist Exhibition (second from right). The caption reads: "BOULEVARD DES CAPUCINES Real style—here's an exhibition worth trying on."

LA SEMAINE COMIQUE, par HADOL

LES BOITEUX DU MARIÉ
Le meilleur des trois est encore cette bonne grosse Bretelle-Billy, avec sa guêtre communicative.

LE CHOIX. — Une marque de la candidature, c'est sa mère, figure de soldat.

PREMIERS ESSAIS À L'ATELIER. — Le Nouveau-Gêné commençant sa jolie collection de médailles.

BOULEVARD DES CAPUCINES. — Vous avez-vous chic, votre exposition qui est tout bien !

PRIX DES CONCOURS HIPPIQUES. — Les paisibles ânonnes regagnent, chargés de concombres, les herbages du Père-d'Auge.

"Exposition du Boulevard des Capucines: Les Impressionnistes" [excerpt]
JULES CASTAGNARY
Le Siècle — Paris, 29 April 1874

–

. . . If we are to have some idea of what these newcomers are about—what they want, what their aspirations are and what they are doing—and if we are to measure the gap separating their mode of interpretation from its predecessor, we have to face squarely the paintings of Messrs. Pissarro, Monet, Sisley, Renoir, Degas and Cuillaumin and of Miss Berthe Morisot. These are the leaders of the new school—if indeed there is a school, a question I shall return to in a moment.

How ironic that four young men and one young woman have been making the jury tremble for the last five or six years! And in striving to block their passage over the same period, the jury has so repeated its blunders, so abused its power, and so compromised itself in the public eye that there is now no one left in France who would dare plead in its favor.

So let's see what's so monstrous and socially subversive about these appalling revolutionaries. . . .

What we have here are the personal notes of each of them. The shared point of view that makes them a group with a collective force of its own in our age of decay is their decision not to strive for detailed finish, but to go no further than a certain overall aspect. Once the impression has been discerned and set down, they declare their task finished. The description *Japanese* that was originally applied to them was meaningless. If we are to describe them with a single word, we must invent the new term *Impressionists*. They are *Impressionists* in the sense that they depict not the landscape but the sensation produced by the landscape. In the catalog Mr. Monet's *Sunrise* [Soleil levant] is called not a *landscape* but an *impression*; the very word has become part of their language. In this respect they are abandoning realism in favor of thoroughgoing idealism.

Thus what differentiates them from their predecessors is the question of more or less finish. The aim of their art has not changed; only the means of expression has been modified—for the worse, some would say.

This, then, is the endeavor—the entire endeavor—of the *Impressionists*.

Exposition des impressionnistes
la peinture impressionniste.
une révolution en peinture et qui débute en faisant de la terreur.

↑ Cham (Amédée-Charles-Henri de Noé), caricature of The First Impressionist Exhibition, 1874. The caption reads: "A revolution in painting, and one that begins by terrorizing."

Just what is this innovation worth? Does it constitute a revolution? No, for the content and to a great extent the form remain the same. Does it signal the coming of a school? No, for a school lives by ideas, not by material considerations; it distinguishes itself by its doctrines and not its practical procedures. So if their method does not constitute a revolution and contains the germ of no school, what is it? A manner, nothing more. After Courbet, Daubigny and Corot one cannot say that the *Impressionists* have invented the unfinished. They trumpet it, exalt it, build a system with it, make it the keystone of art, put it on a pedestal and worship it—and that's all. This overstatement is a manner. And what is the fate of manners in art? To remain the mark of their inventors or of the little cliques that adopt them; to circumscribe rather than broaden; to fossilize without reproducing and then to die where they were born.

Before many years have passed, the artists currently grouped together on boulevard des Capucines will be divided. The best of them, those with style and breeding, will have acknowledged that while there are subjects that lend themselves to mere impression and can be dealt with in a rough way, there are others—much more numerous—that call for exactness of execution; and that the painter's superiority lies precisely in bringing to each subject the style best suited to it and, consequently, in not being systematic, but rather boldly choosing the form that will endow the idea with its fullest expression. Those who have honed their drawing along the way will then and there drop an *Impressionism* they perceive as too thoroughly superficial. As for the others who, not bothering to reflect or learn, have taken the impression to excess, the example of Mr. Cézanne, with *Modern Olympia* [Une moderne Olympia], is an immediate example of the fate that awaits them. With their endless idealization they will achieve that degree of unbridled romanticism in which nature is no longer any more than an excuse for daydreaming; in which the imagination becomes powerless to formulate anything other than personal, subjective fantasies that find no broader echo because they lack discipline and cannot be verified in reality.

"Les Intransigeants" [excerpt]
HENRI POLDAY
La Renaissance Littéraire et Artistique — Paris, 3 May 1874

–

Intransigents: such is the designation claimed by a group of modern painters headed by Messrs. Claude Monet, Pissarro and Degas.

Why Intransigents? Because they reject the authority of the jury? Far from blaming them for this, I applaud their endeavor, and regret that their example is not more widely followed and that artists, those swaggering advocates of independence so far incapable of advancing without protection, should not be able to unite against state tutelage, repudiating both candidacies and official honors, and live as free beings. But in calling themselves "Intransigents" are they not in fact setting out to found, amid the different schools of painting, a new school with a new title? This seems the more likely hypothesis: moving through their nonselective exhibition the visitor is struck by the revolutionary emphasis of pictures that are without exception outrageously realistic.

So what is this intransigent realism?

"Our aim," they say, "is to take nature just as it is." *Just as it is!* But in their works—roughs from which all detail has been removed—they offer less of what is than what they see. This is an impression-based painting. And the impression being as variable as nature itself, they paint less what they see than what they *have seen*.

Let us take an impression of evening, for example. Can you halt the sun and the clouds? During the time it takes to set up, choose the palette and prepare the tone, the sun wanes and the cloud flees or alters. By the second brushstroke the sky has changed. By the time you've filled your canvas twenty different effects have ensued—you should have started over twenty times. So what if you come back tomorrow, same place, same time? All you will find is a silhouette, with only your memory to revive yesterday's spectacle. And however sloppy your style, however rapid your execution, you don't turn out seven or eight pictures a day. Just as for other painters, a picture demands more than one sitting. So where does this leave your realism? You start with a quick sketch from nature and finish up either taking another look at the subject, which provides the form and recalls the effect, or in the studio, with notes on the form and a memory of the effect; I know no painter who works otherwise. So from the realism point of view the Intransigent gentlemen are no innovators.

So let's look for their originality elsewhere. "Nature," Delacroix said, "is only a dictionary. . . Painters obedient to their imaginations go through their dictionary for material that fits with their conception of things; and then, adapting it with a degree of art, they give it a completely new aspect." Copying words one by one from a dictionary, always using the eyes and never the brain, bluntly reproducing the retinal image with no input from the intelligence—such is the Intransigents' ideal. For them a study is a picture; they even go so far as to regard only studies as pictures. Don't talk to them about widening a road, pushing back a tree, pruning a branch or changing a line. They would cry sacrilege: "Let us touch nothing in nature."

And the art of composition? We compose, they protest, but we compose in our own manner. Let's take a look at your manner. One artistic principle has it that the subject goes at the center of the picture, with the secondary elements radiating out around it; another has it that the subject is laid out between the high point and the two extremities of the base. Who cares! That's standard academic stuff, but we've reversed the old methods. Our system consists simply in choosing the spot we want to reproduce, the word we feel like copying. Great! And determined not to change it at all, you reproduce it—copy it—as is, finding nature's arrangement just fine. Here we're in agreement: your composition procedure means not composing. A photographer is no less of an artist than you. The best you can say for him, too, is that he chooses the spot at which to point his camera. Following this line of thought, honorable Intransigents, when color photography comes along, the prints colored by the action of sunlight will be indisputably superior to your pictures as faithful copies of nature. Your kind of realism will be ousted by a more accurate one. Maybe then you will realize where you went wrong. There will have to be a return to real painting, the painting of the imagination—unless, as the precursors of color photography, you resign yourselves to being no longer anything but its parodists. But for the time being the Intransigents, out to revenge themselves on the art that disowns them and believing themselves great artists by dint of constantly telling each other so, have only invented one thing: the suppression of art. . . .

"À Côté du Salon. II: Le Plein Air Exposition du Boulevard des Capucines" [excerpt]
ERNEST CHESNEAU
Paris-Journal and *Le Soir* — Paris, 7 May 1874

–

. . . One must always take the inertia of public judgment into account. The public has no initiative. Someone else has to have it for them. Between two works presented simultaneously, one complying with the conventions and the other flying in the face of the public's habits, you can be sure the public will opt for convention rather than innovation.

This is what's happening on the boulevard des Capucines.

The only aspect of this exhibition that is really interesting and worthy of examination also happens to be the only one whose curious significance is beyond most of the visitors.

This coming together was premature, to say the least. A few years from now, who knows? Then it may have something to teach us and, under the right circumstances, mean a triumph for the "plein air" school.

This is what I intend to call this school—which, oddly, has been dubbed the Intransigents—for the pursuit of reality in the open air is the most obvious focus of its members' efforts.

On boulevard des Capucines the Plein Air School is represented by Messrs. Monet, Pissarro, Sisley, de Gas [Degas], Rouart and Renoir, and Miss Morisot.

The leader—Mr. Manet—is absent. Because he feared the eccentricities of some paintings whose creators I haven't named? Because he disapproved of the compromise that has led, in such a small exhibition, to the inclusion of pictures conceived and painted in a spirit utterly different from that of the school? I don't know. Was he right or wrong to hold back? I prefer not to say. But beyond question, a selection of his paintings would have made the event more momentous, or at the very least more comprehensive.

It may also be that Mr. Manet, being combative by nature, prefers to do battle on common ground—that of the official Salon. Let us respect the individual's freedom to prefer one means of action to another.

What is relevant here for the potential visitor is that none of the pictures on view was submitted

to the offical jury. The exhibition has been open since 15 April and so is in no way a Salon des Refusés. But for those who have already seen the exhibition, there is no point in adding that not one of those works would have been admitted had they had to pass the test. Why? In my opinion for reasons all to their credit, for they break overtly and totally with the traditional conventions.

Indeed, in this exhibition I find a dozen or so canvases that offer new, positive possibilities as to the wealth of effects that can be obtained with paint.

Never, for example, has the northern light in our homes been rendered with the power of illusion to be found in the painting by Mr. Manet [Monet] titled *The Picnic* [Le déjeuner]. Never have the hustle and bustle of the streets, the seething of the crowds on the sidewalk and the carriages on the road, the movement of the trees amid the light and dust of the boulevard, and the elusive, the fleeting and the instantaneous been perceived and set down in all their prodigious volatility as they are in the extraordinary, marvelous rough to which Mr. Manet [Monet] has given the title *Boulevard des Capucines*. Looking at it from a distance one hails, in this stream of life, in this quivering of great areas of shadow and light glittering with darker shadows and brighter lights, a true masterpiece. But then you go closer and everything vanishes, leaving only an indecipherable chaos of palette scrapings.

Obviously this is not art's last word, or that of this particular form. For the sketch must still be transformed into a finished work. But what a caution call for those with a well-tuned ear, and how far it carries into the future . . .

All is not equally good in Mr. Sisley's submissions; but there is one, *The Seine in Port-Marly* [La Seine à Port-Marly], which is the absolute realization of the school's ambitions for the landscape. I know of no picture past or present that provides the physical "plein air" sensation so completely and so perfectly. Painting has acquired something totally new here, something not to be overlooked.

We are told that a further exhibition by the same group of artists will be held in the autumn. Less hurried and under less pressure to see other exhibitions, we will doubtless be able to study these curious artistic manifestations at greater leisure.

But the Société Anonyme—which really does exist, as a cooperative—must stop and think. Its current mode of organization leaves the door open to all the incompetents and official exhibition stragglers who buy a share. Here lie the seeds of death.

If the association fails to change its structure and affirm a shared principle, it will not survive as an art venture. And that it should survive as a commercial one does not interest me at all.

"Salon de 1874 à Paris"
ARISTE
L'Indépendance Belge — Brussels, 13 June 1874
–

Mr. Manet is one of those who claim that in painting one can—and must—settle for an *impression*. Not long ago we saw an exhibition by these *Impressionalists* at Nadar's on the boulevard des Capucines. It was utterly disconcerting. Messrs. Manet—a more intransigent Manet—Pissarro, Degas, etc., seemed to have declared war on beauty. The *impressions* of some of these landscapists degenerated into fog and soot. The most remarkable of all of them is Mr. Degas, whose interiors—the theater, the foyer at the Opera, circuses, laundries—are stunningly, scrupulously true to life. But as a realist Mr. Degas seems to me a kind of defrocked priest, waging war on drawing with the weapons of a true draftsman. Didn't he study under Hippolyte Flandrin? You can feel it, whatever he might say. Mr. Manet studied under Thomas Couture, who taught his pupils how to paint in twelve easy lessons: all you had to do was overlay a peach primer with another color; you learned to paint by working on the back of the canvas, like the Gobelins tapestry-makers. Yet Mr. Manet can paint, and very well; last year's *The Good Pint* [Le bon bock] was adequate proof of that. How, after such a work, can someone return to these fleeting impressions, these sketches they try to palm off on us as finished works?

Correspondence
PIERRE GUICHARD [TEACHER OF BERTHE MORISOT] TO MADAME MORISOT [MOTHER OF MORISOT]
Paris, April/May 1874
–

The kind welcome which you gave me this morning moved me deeply. I felt younger by fifteen years, for I was suddenly transported back to those days when, as teacher and friend, I guided your delightful daughters in the arts.

I have seen Nadar's exhibition rooms, and wish to tell you my frank opinion immediately. When I entered, Madame, and saw your daughter's work in that appalling setting, my heart sank. I said to myself, "One does not associate with madmen except at some peril. Manet was right in trying to dissuade her from exhibiting."

To be sure, contemplating and examining these paintings, it is possible to find some excellent things, but for the most part all the exhibitors are a bit touched in the head. If Mlle Berthe is set on doing something violent she should pour petrol on these things and set them alight rather than destroy all she has done so far. How could she exhibit a work of art as delicate as hers next to *The Bachelor's Dream*? The two paintings actually touch each other!

That a young girl should destroy letters reminding her of a sad episode in her past life I can understand; such ashes are justifiable. But to deny all the efforts, the aspirations, the dreams that have filled one's life is sheer insanity. Worse, it is sacrilege.

As a painter, a friend, and a physician, here is my prescription. She must go to the Louvre twice a week, stand in front of the Correggio for three hours, and ask his forgiveness for having attempted to express in oil what can only be said in watercolor. To be the first watercolorist of one's own time is a pretty enviable position. I hope, Madame, that you will be kind enough to answer the well-meant letter, which comes straight from the heart, for I am greatly interested in this promising artist. She must absolutely break with this new school, this self-styled school of the future.

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From Bernard Denvir, ed., The Impressionists at First Hand *(New York: Thames and Hudson, 1987), 85–86.*

03

Salon d'Hiver de la Société des Artistes Indépendants *The First Salon des Indépendants*

Paris, 1884

LOCATION AND DATES
Pavillon de la Ville de Paris, Champs-Élysées, Paris,
c. 10 December 1884–10 January 1885

ORGANIZER
Société des Artistes Indépendants—Peintres, Sculpteurs, Architectes, Graveurs, et Dessinateurs (Society of Independent Artists—Painters, Sculptors, Architects, Engravers, and Draftsmen)

ITINERARY
None

ARTISTS
Charles Angrand, Louis-Joseph Anthonissen, Marie Bashkirtseff, Émile Bastien-Lepage, Matteo Battaglia, Auguste Baud-Bovy, Eugène Bellangé, Béatrice Berriat-Blanc, Louis-Émile Bertrand, Fulgence Candelot, François-Rupert Carabin, Émile-Gustave Cavallo-Peduzzi, Cazin, Georges Champion, Grégoire Chapoton, Henri Coeylas, Léonce-Augustin Costil, D. Cox, Henri-Edmond Cross, Léopold-Barthélémy Dehaisne, Hippolyte Delacour, Aimé Depollier, François-Xavier Devinat, Charles Dollfus, Lucien Dollfus, René Dollfus, Paul Dubois, Albert Dubois-Pillet, Léon Duvauchel, Jack Elry, Louis Fajon, Louis-Joseph Fanton, Auguste-Émile Flick, Christian Freundt, David Thomas Scott Fuller, Barthélémy Émile Gérard-Triplet, Joseph Gibbon, Eugène Gourdon, Jules Gourdon, Armand Guillaumin, Alfred-André Guinard, Marie-Constance Guinard, Marie-Edmond Honer, Charles Hutin, Henri-Laurent Jaudin, Auguste Lançon, Thérèse Landré, Louis Latouche, Louis-Eugène Laverne, Francis Lavialle

eventh and eighth Impressionist shows, a group of orges Seurat, Paul Signac, and Odilon Redon established es Indépendants, broadcasting its opposition to ystem with the motto of its annual exhibition, "No Jury, té stated its goal clearly in its statutes of incorporation: present their works to public judgment with complete organization's show presented the work of all who paid les Indépendants became known as the most unruly of bitions contending for public attention at century's end. ndépendants is best known as the early showplace of nd, in the spring of 1911, for the first substantial public n. The exhibition's greatest significance, however, nbolism of its name. For the idea of a large independent ent of state sponsorship, independent of a selecting ependent of established norms—became central to pendent shows proliferated internationally, including where only Marcel Duchamp's urinal was excluded s to the 1917 Society of Independent Artists exhibition

ly modern period, the term "independents" would retain mple, when the Japanese newspaper *Yomiuri* established n Tokyo in 1949 to display the work of young artists, he *Yomiuri* Independent Exhibition. In France, the ndépendants has survived into the twenty-first century, xhibition, for which an entry fee still guarantees postwar growth of an international system of commercial ort for advanced art, the gatekeepers of the art world not the avant-garde but rather the conventional. Salon des Indépendants—descendant of radical displays —is a refuge for the presentation of traditional artworks.

to the official jury. The exhibition has been open since 15 April and so is in no way a Salon des Refusés. But for those who have already seen the exhibition, there is no point in adding that not one of those works would have been admitted had they had to pass the test. Why? In my opinion for reasons all to their credit; for they break overtly and totally with the traditional conventions.

Indeed, in this exhibition I find a dozen or so canvases that offer new, positive possibilities as to the wealth of effects that can be obtained with paint.

Never, for example, has the northern light in our homes been rendered with the power of illusion to be found in the painting by Mr. Manet [Monet] titled *The Picnic* [Le déjeuner]. Never have the hustle and bustle of the streets, the seething of the crowds on the sidewalks and the carriages on the road, the movement of the trees amid the light and dust of the boulevard, and the elusive, the fleeting and the instantaneous, been perceived and set down in all their prodigious volatility as they are in the extraordinary, marvelous rough to which Mr. Manet [Monet] has given the title *Boulevard des Capucine*. Looking at it from a distance one hails, in this stream of life, in this quivering of great areas of shadow and light glittering with darker shadows and brighter light, a true masterpiece. But then you go closer and everything vanishes, leaving only an indecipherable chaos of palette scrapings.

Obviously this is not art's last word, nor that of this particular form. For the sketch must still be transformed into a finished work. But what a clarion call for those with a well-tuned ear, and how far it carries into the future! . . .

All is not equally good in Mr. Sisley's submissions; but there is one, *The Seine in Port-Marly* [La Seine à Port-Marly], which is the absolute realization of the school's ambitions for the landscape. I know of no picture past or present that provides the physical "plein air" sensation so completely and so perfectly. Painting has acquired something totally new here, something not to be overlooked.

We are told that a further exhibition by the same group of artists will be held in the autumn. Less hurried and under less pressure to see other exhibitions, we will doubtless be able to study these curious artistic manifestations at greater leisure.

But the Société Anonyme—which really does exist, as a cooperative—must stop and think. Its current mode of org
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A

L'Indépendance Belge

Mr. Manet is one of th
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Not long ago we saw
pretionalists at Nad
Capucines. It was utt
Manet:—a more intra
Degas, etc., seemed to
ty. The *impressions* of
degenerated into fog
able of all of them is M
the theater, the foyer
dries—are stunningly
But as a realist Mr. D
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under Hippolyte Flan
ever he might say.
Thomas Couture, wh
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learned to paint by v
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Mr. Manet can paint,
Good Print [Le bon b
that How, after such
to these fleeting impr
try to palm off on us

de Lameillère, Léon Legat, Maurice-Julien Le Natur, Eugène Marc, Ernest Marietti, Jules Marinier, Paul Martinet, Constant-François Més, Paul-Eugène Mesplès, Henri Metéyé, Emmanuel Meyer, Jeanne Mez, Georges-Paulin Monciny, Ernest de Montfort, Charles-Camille Morin, Auguste Muri, Henri Neyrac, Madona Olivetti, Léon-Louis Oury, Nicolas Paumen, Jean-Joseph Pélissier, Edmond-Marie André Picard, Charles Pipard, Ferdinand Pitard, Léonide Poisson, Elise Prébet, Jules Pressigny, Arthur Rathouis, Odilon Redon, Henri-Dominique Renaud, Lucien Renout, François Reverchon, Paul Richner, Charles-Auguste Risler, Roll, Henri Rosier, Pierre-Gustave Saint-Laurent, Léopold-Pierre-Antoine Savine, Alfred Schlaich, Claude-Émile Schuffenecker, Arsène-Gilles Seguin, Louis Serendat de Belzim, Georges Seurat, Eugène Sevallée, Paul Signac, Aline-Marguerite Sisos, Émile Solvet, Charles Soulacroix, Jean Spurny, Albert Tellier, François-Victor Valtat-Delion, Edmond-Eugène Valton, Perrine Viger, Georges Vincent, Hermine Waternau, Georges Zevort

EXHIBITION CATALOG

Catalogue des oeuvres exposées au Pavillon de la Ville de Paris, Champs-Élysées (Catalog of works exhibited at the Pavillon de la Ville de Paris, Champs-Élysées). Paris: Imprimerie A. Lahure, 1884.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Number of artists: c. 105
Number of works: 280–300
Total attendance: c. 7,000

In 1884, between the seventh and eighth Impressionist shows, a group of painters including Georges Seurat, Paul Signac, and Odilon Redon established the Société des Artistes Indépendants, broadcasting its opposition to the traditional Salon system with the motto of its annual exhibition, "No Jury, No Prizes." The Société stated its goal clearly in its statutes of incorporation: to allow the artists to present their works to public judgment with complete freedom. Because the organization's show presented the work of all who paid a small fee, the Salon des Indépendants became known as the most unruly of the large Parisian exhibitions contending for public attention at century's end.

The Salon des Indépendants is best known as the early showplace of Neo-Impressionism and, in the spring of 1911, for the first substantial public presentation of Cubism. The exhibition's greatest significance, however, may be in the very symbolism of its name. For the idea of a large independent exhibition—independent of state sponsorship, independent of a selecting authority, with art independent of established norms—became central to modern art. And independent shows proliferated internationally, including in the United States, where only Marcel Duchamp's urinal was excluded from the 2,500 entries to the 1917 Society of Independent Artists exhibition in New York.

Well past the early modern period, the term "independents" would retain its resonance. For example, when the Japanese newspaper *Yomiuri* established its annual exhibition in Tokyo in 1949 to display the work of young artists, the show was called the *Yomiuri* Independent Exhibition. In France, the Société des Artistes Indépendants has survived into the twenty-first century, continuing its yearly exhibition, for which an entry fee still guarantees inclusion. But with the postwar growth of an international system of commercial and institutional support for advanced art, the gatekeepers of the art world have come to exclude not the avant-garde but rather the conventional. Ironically, the current Salon des Indépendants—descendant of radical displays of Fauves and Cubists—is a refuge for the presentation of traditional artworks.

SOCIÉTÉ
DES
ARTISTES INDÉPENDANTS

STATUTS

Art. 1er. — Il est formé à partir du 29 juin 1884 entre les artistes peintres, sculpteurs, architectes, graveurs et dessinateurs, qui adhéreront aux présents statuts et qui seront agréés par le Comité dont il sera ci-après parlé, une Société mutuelle qui a pour objet l'organisation, avec l'autorisation de l'autorité compétente, d'Expositions annuelles ou périodiques des Beaux-Arts (Peinture, Sculpture, Architecture, Gravure et Dessins), basées sur la suppression des jurys d'admission. Elle prend le titre de Société mutuelle des Artistes Indépendants.

La Société pourra, le cas échéant, organiser des Expositions dans les principales villes de province et de l'étranger.

Son siège est établi à Paris, rue du Commerce, 29.

Il pourra être transféré ailleurs, mais à Paris, par simple décision du Comité de direction, et avec l'autorisation de M. le Préfet de police.

Le siège social est attributif de domicile et de juridiction.

Art. 2. — La durée de la Société est illimitée.

Art. 3. — Pour être sociétaire, il faut :

Signer son adhésion aux présents statuts;

Verser d'avance six mois de cotisation comptés à partir du premier jour du mois dans lequel on adhère;

Verser également un droit d'adhésion de 1 franc.

La cotisation mensuelle est de 1 fr. 25 cent.; elle est payable d'avance et par mois; les sociétaires sont tenus de la faire parvenir sans frais au Trésorier de la Société, qui leur en délivre un reçu à souche.

Si un sociétaire néglige d'envoyer sa cotisation mensuelle, elles lui est réclamée par lettre quinze jours après l'échéance; les frais de poste lui sont imputés. Tout sociétaire qui aura négligé de payer trois cotisations mensuelles échues, sans avoir motivé son retard, sera rayé de la Société, ipso facto, quinze jours après la date de la dernière lettre lui réclamant ses cotisations échues. Tout mois commencé est intégralement dû.

Tout membre qui démissionne doit être au courant de ses cotisations; la démission est toujours donnée par écrit; elle doit être datée et signée; elle est adressée au Trésorier de la Société.

Art. 4. — Les sociétaires sont répartis, suivant leur spécialité, en cinq sections, qui comprennent :

La 1re, la Peinture;
La 2e, la Sculpture;
La 3e, l'Architecture;
La 4e, la Gravure et la Lithographie;
La 5e, les Dessins, Cartons, Aquarelles, Pastels, Miniatures, Vitraux, Émaux, Porcelaines et Faïences.

Art. 5. — Un sociétaire peut être membre de plusieurs sections.

— 4 —

Art. 6. — Le titre de membre d'honneur peut être conféré par le Comité aux personnes qui auront rendu d'importants services à l'Art ou à la Société. Ce titre ne donne pas le droit d'assister aux Assemblées générales.

Art. 7. — Le fonds social se compose :

1° De la cotisation mensuelle et du droit d'adhésion;

2° D'une somme versée par chaque exposant et qui ne pourra dépasser 10 francs ni être inférieure à 5 francs, quel que soit le nombre d'œuvres accordé par le règlement d'Exposition;

Toutefois, les sociétaires domiciliés en dehors des départements de la Seine et de Seine-et-Oise sont dispensés du paiement de cette somme à partir du jour où ils comptent un an de sociétariat;

3° Des intérêts des capitaux appartenant à la Société;

4° Des bénéfices des Expositions;

5° Des produits des amendes infligées au Comité (art. 20).

Art. 8. — Les ressources de la Société sont affectées :

1° A l'organisation et au fonctionnement des Expositions. A cet effet, un fonds spécial de 10,000 francs sera tout d'abord constitué sur les premières ressources de la Société et placé dans une caisse publique; si ce fonds vient à être entamé, la somme distraite sera rétablie aussitôt que possible;

2° Aux acquisitions et dépenses pour objets mobiliers votées par le Comité.

3° A la création et à l'accroissement d'un fonds de réserve qui sera placé dans une caisse publique, destiné à faire face aux dépenses imprévues;

4° Aux remboursements des droits d'Exposition, aux sociétaires ayant payé au moins deux ans de sociétariat quand le fonds de réserve aura dépassé 10,000 francs;

5° Tous les trois ans, à partir du 31 décembre qui suivra la constitution du fonds spécial d'Exposition de 10,000 francs, le cinquième des bénéfices de cette période triennale sera partagé entre les sociétaires, au prorata de l'ancienneté dans cette période de trois ans; l'ancienneté d'un sociétaire ne compte que de sa dernière admission. Un sociétaire démissionnaire ou rayé pendant cette période n'a droit à aucune répartition;

6° Et aux frais généraux de toute nature.

Art. 9. — L'administration de la Société est confiée à un Comité composé de 15 membres pris parmi les sociétaires français, dont le mandat est gratuit. Le Comité est nommé par les sociétaires, réunis en Assemblée générale, à la majorité des voix.

Art. 10. — Le Comité restera en fonction pendant deux ans à partir du jour de son élection.

Les membres sortants sont rééligibles.

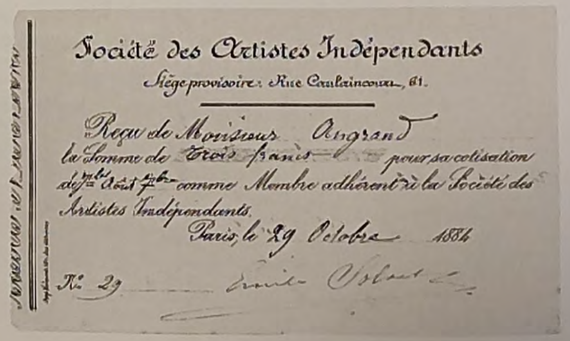
Art. 11. — Il sera adjoint au Comité un Trésorier, dont les attributions seront indiquées dans le règlement spécial d'administration. Le Trésorier sera nommé par le Comité à la majorité des voix; il peut être changé par le Comité de la même manière.

Cependant, jusqu'à ce que la situation financière de la Société lui permette d'avoir un Trésorier rétribué, un membre du Comité en remplira les fonctions. Sa nomination et son changement auront lieu dans les conditions indiquées plus haut.

Art. 12. — Si, par suite de vacance, de décès, de démission ou autre empêchement, le Comité se trouve réduit à moins de 12 membres avant l'expiration de ses fonctions, il sera pourvu au remplacement des

← Statutes of incorporation of the Société des Artistes Indépendants, 1886 (excerpt). The original statutes were written by one of the vice presidents of the Société, painter Albert Dubois-Pillet, and published in *Affiches Parisiennes*, a French legal journal, on 14 June 1884. The character of the Société is established in the first article of the statutes, which declares as its goal the organization of annual exhibitions "based on the principle of abolishing the admissions jury." Other articles define the monthly membership fee and members' obligations, and state that members will be divided into five sections according to specialty: painting, sculpture, architecture, printmaking (such as engraving and lithography), and a section incorporating drawing, watercolor, pastels, glasswork, and other media. (Translation, p. 56.)

→ Receipt issued by the Société to painter Charles Angrand, one of the society's founders, for his membership fee of 3 francs, 29 October 1884. A membership card was issued to all who joined the group.


Société des Artistes Indépendants
Siège provisoire : Rue Coulaincourt, 61.

Reçu de Monsieur Angrand
la Somme de Trois francs pour sa cotisation
de 1er Août 1884 comme Membre adhérent de la Société des
Artistes Indépendants.
Paris, le 29 Octobre 1884
N° 29

→ The Pavillon de la Ville de Paris, also known as the Pavillon Polychrome, site of the Salon des Indépendants in 1884. Built for the 1878 Universal Exposition, the building featured large iron-frame doors and colorful enameled tiles. The city of Paris agreed to lend the space free of charge to the Société des Artistes Indépendants for their first exhibition. In exchange, the Société agreed to donate its profits to benefit victims of the recent cholera outbreak in Paris. (By the end of the exhibition, however, the Société had lost 2,300 francs.) Approximately 300 works by more than 100 artists were installed in five large rooms.

A selection of paintings from
The First Salon des Indépendants:

← Odilon Redon
Lady Macbeth, 1876
Charcoal and chalk on pink paper
19½ × 11⅞ in (49.5 × 30.7 cm)

↙ Charles Angrand
In the Garden [Dans le jardin], 1883
Oil on canvas
28¾ × 36¼ in (73 × 92 cm)

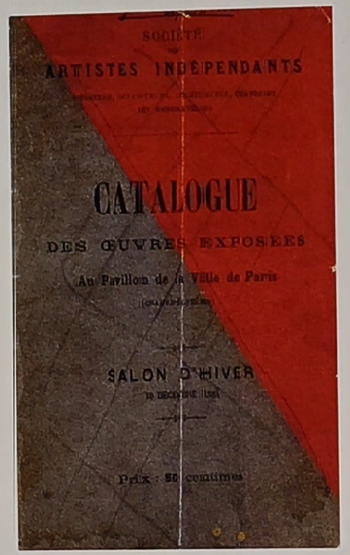
↙↙ Paul Signac
Port-en-Bessin: Le Catel, 1884
Oil on canvas
17¾ × 25¼ in [45 × 64 cm]

↓ Odilon Redon
The Egg [L'oeuf], 1885
Lithograph on chine appliqué
Composition: 11⅛ × 8⅛ in
(27.9 × 22.6 cm), sheet: 16¼ × 10⅛ in
(41.3 × 27.7 cm)

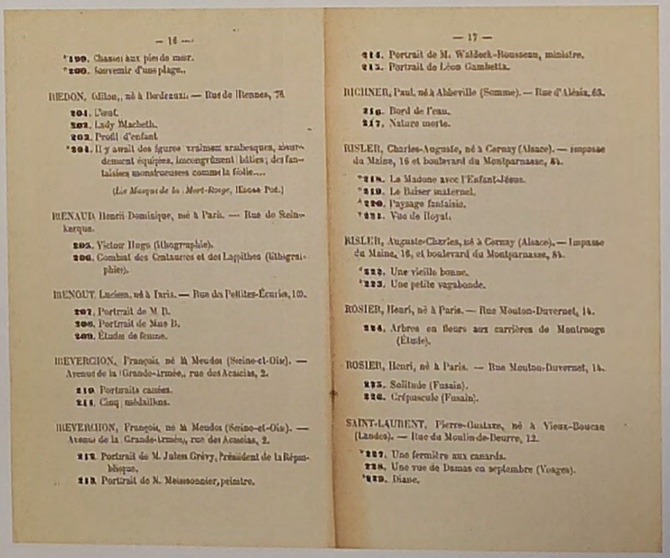
→ Paul Signac
Coal Crane, Clichy
[Grue du charbon, Clichy], 1884
Oil on canvas
23¼ × 36 in (59 × 91 cm)

↘ Odilon Redon
The Masque of the Red Death
[Le masque de la mort-rouge], 1883
Charcoal on brown paper
17¼ × 14⅛ in [43.8 × 35.9 cm]

↓ Georges Seurat
Landscape, Island of La Grande Jatte
[Paysage, l'île de La Grande Jatte], 1884
Study for *A Sunday on La Grande Jatte*
[Un dimanche après-midi sur l'île de
La Grande Jatte], 1884–86
Oil on canvas
25¾ × 32 in (65.3 × 81.2 cm)
In a review of the Salon des Indépendants
(translation, p. 57), critic Roger Marx
wrote of "an excellent charcoal portrait
by Mr. Seurat . . . accompanied by a set
of studies and a landscape of a remarkable,
ethereal transparency, bathed in the
brightness of a hot summer sun."



← Cover of the catalog for The First Salon des Indépendants, officially titled "Salon d'Hiver de la Société des Artistes Indépendants" [The Winter Salon of the Société des Artistes Indépendants], 1884. The show was one of the first exhibitions of the group of artists who would be known as the Neo-Impressionists, led by Georges Seurat and Paul Signac. In the catalog, an asterisk to the left of an entry number indicated that the work was available for sale.



— 16 —

*199. Chasse aux pies de mer.
*200. Souvenir d'une plage.

REDON, Odilon, né à Bordeaux. — Rue de Rennes, 78.

201. L'œuf.
202. Lady Macbeth.
203. Profil d'enfant.
*204. Il y avait des figures vraiment arabesques, heureusement équipées, incongrûment hâties; des fantaisies monstrueuses comme la folie....
(*Le Masque de la Mort-Rouge*, Edgar Poë.)

RENAUD, Henri Dominique, né à Paris. — Rue de Seine-Barque.

205. Victor Hugo (lithographie).
206. Combat des Centaures et des Lapithes (lithographie).

RENOUT, Lucien, né à Paris. — Rue des Petites-Écuries, 10.

207. Portrait de M. D.
208. Portrait de Mme D.
209. Étude de femme.

REVERCHON, François, né à Meudon (Seine-et-Oise). — Avenue de la Grande-Armée, rue des Acacias, 2.

210. Portraits cantes.
211. Cinq médaillons.

REVERCHON, François, né à Meudon (Seine-et-Oise). — Avenue de la Grande-Armée, rue des Acacias, 2.

212. Portrait de M. Jules Grévy, Président de la République.
213. Portrait de M. Meissonnier, peintre.

— 17 —

214. Portrait de M. Waldeck-Rousseau, ministre.
215. Portrait de Léon Gambetta.

RICHNER, Paul, né à Abbeville (Somme). — Rue d'Alésia, 63.

216. Bord de l'eau.
217. Nature morte.

RISLER, Charles-Auguste, né à Cernay (Alsace). — Impasse du Maine, 16 et boulevard du Montparnasse, 81.

*218. La Madone avec l'Enfant-Jésus.
*219. Le Baiser maternel.
*220. Paysage fantaisie.
*221. Vue de Royat.

RISLER, Auguste-Charles, né à Cernay (Alsace). — Impasse du Maine, 16, et boulevard du Montparnasse, 81.

*222. Une vieille bonne.
*223. Une petite vagabonde.

ROSIER, Henri, né à Paris. — Rue Mouton-Duvernet, 14.

224. Arbres en fleurs aux carrières de Montrouge (Étude).

ROSIER, Henri, né à Paris. — Rue Mouton-Duvernet, 14.

225. Solitude (Fusain).
226. Crépuscule (Fusain).

SAINT-LAURENT, Pierre-Gustave, né à Vieux-Boucau (Landes). — Rue du Moulin-de-Beurre, 12.

*227. Une fermière aux canards.
228. Une rue de Dames en septembre (Vosges).
*229. Diane.

54 1884 – *The First Salon des Indépendants*

→ Spread showing catalog entry for works by Georges Seurat, nos. 241–242. This listing includes *Landscape, Island of la Grande Jatte*, titled here *L'Île de la Grande Jatte (Etude)*, no. 241, a study for his masterwork, *A Sunday on la Grande Jatte*, which was first exhibited at the Eighth Impressionist Exhibition in 1886. The entry for Paul Signac, nos. 248–251, is listed under one of his middle names, Jules.

↘ The last page of the catalog reproduces an abridged version of Article 1 of the statutes, highlighting the Société's core tenet: annual exhibitions based on the principle of abolishing the admissions jury.

— 18 —

SAVINE, Léopold Pierre-Antoine, né à Paris. — Boulevard du Montparnasse, 81.

230. Une tête d'enfant (Étude).

SCHLAICH, Alfred, né à Paris. — Rue de Lagny, 30, Montreuil-sous-Bois (Seine).

*231. Pont de l'Archevêché. Dessin.
*232. Dans la Cour, Nourrice. Un écolier. Dessin.

SCHUFFENECKER, Claude-Emile, né à Fresnes-Saint-Mammès (Haute-Saône). — Boulevard Edgar Quinet, 35.

233. Étude de femme.
234. La Butte-aux-Cailles, à Paris.
235. Le soir.
236. Le retour des champs.

SEGUIN, Arsène, né à Saint-Malo. — Rue du Chemin-de-Fer, 26 (Courbevoie).

237. La falaise.
238. Le décollé de Saint-Lunaire (Saint-Malo).

SERENDAT DE BELZIM, Louis, né à l'Ile Maurice. — Rue du Rocher, 56.

239. Parisienne (type).
240. Franciscaia.

SEURAT, Georges-Pierre, né à Paris. — Boulevard Magenta, 110

241. L'île de la Grande-Jatte (Etude).
242. 9 croquetons.

SEURAT, Georges-Pierre, né à Paris. — Boulevard Magenta, 110.

243. Portrait de M. A. J. (Dessin).

— 19 —

SEVALLÉE, Eugène, né à Dijon (Côte-d'Or). — Rue Chevaleresse, 12.

*244. Fleurs (marguerites).
*245. Fleurs (camomille).
*246. Rose dans un verre.
*247. Pêches et raisins.

SIGNAC, Jules, né à Paris. — Rue d'Orchampt, 10.

*248. Le soleil sur le Câtel (Port-en-Bessin).
*249. La jetée d'amont (Port-en-Bessin).
*250. La grue du charbon, carrosserie de Clichy.
*251. L'ombre dans la rue de la Station (Asnières).

SISOS, Mme Aline-Marguerite, née à Limoges. — Boulevard de Clichy, 29.

252. Escalier abbatial au Mont Saint-Michel.
253. Crypte au Mont Saint-Michel.

SOLVET, Emile, né à Paris. — Rue Caulaincourt, 61.

254. Portrait de Mlle Y. S.
255. Portrait de Mme S.
256. Portrait de Mme L. S.
*257. Jeanne-d'Arc au tribunal.

SPURNY, Jean, né à Prossnitz (Moravie). — Faubourg Saint-Martin, 188.

*258. Un dimanche sur les boulevards extérieurs.
*259. Effet d'automne.
*260. Le chemin vert au Raincy.

SOULACROIX, Ch.
chez M. Dangleterre, rue de Seine, 42.

261. Paysans italiens.
262. Pêcheuse napolitaine.

— 20 —

TELLIER, Albert, né à Condé-sur-Noireau (Calvados). — Rue Gros, 39 (Auteuil-Paris).

*263. Gibier. — Poisson.
*264. Fruits.

VALTAT, François-Victor, né à Paris. — Rue Duplessis, 63, à Versailles.

265. Marine (Étude d'après nature).

VALTON, Edmond-Eugène, né à Paris. — Boulevart Richard-Lenoir.

*266. Un coin de Paris. (Omnibus et victoria).
*267. Bateau à vapeur parisien.
*268. Déblayeurs au quai de Dercy.
*269. Une tranchée pour la paix.

VIGER (Mme Veuve H., Perrine), née à Châlons, — Passage Stanislas, 7.

*270. La rivière de la Deune, en Bourgogne.
*271. Sapho.
*272. Laurence.

Elle regarde la lune
Longtemps, comme quelqu'un qu'une image importune
(LAMARTINE, Joscelyn).

*273. Eurydice.

La mort ferma ses yeux,
Les nymphes, ses compagnes,
De leurs cris douloureux
Remplirent les montagnes.

VINCENT, Georges, né à Chamecy (Nièvre). — Rue Brezin, 3.

274. Confitures de prunes.

WATERNAU, Mlle Hermine, née à Paris. — Rue Paul-Louis-Courier, 2.

SOCIÉTÉ
DES
ARTISTES INDÉPENDANTS
PEINTRES, SCULPTEURS, ARCHITECTES, GRAVEURS ET DESSINATEURS

Art. 1. Il est formé à partir d'aujourd'hui, 11 juin 1884, entre les artistes peintres, sculpteurs, architectes, graveurs et dessinateurs, qui adhéreront aux présents statuts, une Société qui a pour objet l'organisation d'Expositions annuelles ou périodiques des Beaux-Arts (Peinture, Sculpture, Architecture, Gravure et Dessins). **basées sur la suppression des jurys d'admission.** Elle prend le titre de *Société des Artistes indépendants*.

1884 – *The First Salon des Indépendants* 55

"Société des Artistes Indépendants Statuts"

[excerpt]
Paris, 1886

–

ARTICLE 1 — Since 29 June 1884 there has been established, among painters, sculptors, architects, engravers, and draftsmen (who will adhere to the present statutes and who will be approved by the Committee mentioned below), a mutually beneficial association, which has for its object the organization, with the permission of the appropriate authority, of annual and periodic exhibitions of fine arts (painting, sculpture, architecture, engraving, and drawing), based on the principle of abolishing the admissions jury. This association will assume the name Mutual Society of Independent Artists.

Should the occasion arise, the Society may organize exhibitions in the chief cities of the provinces and abroad.

It will be based in Paris at 79, rue du Commerce.

It may move to another address, although only within Paris, if so decided by the Administrative Committee and if the requisite permission has been granted by the Chief Commissioner of the Paris Police.

The Society's head office is its address for both residential and juridical purposes.

ARTICLE 2 — The Society shall continue in existence until further notice.

ARTICLE 3 — A prospective member of the Society must:

formally confirm in writing his adherence to the present statutes;

pay a six-month subscription in advance, starting on the first day of the month in which he joins;

also pay a joining fee of 1 franc.

The monthly subscription is 1 franc 25 centimes; this sum is payable monthly and in advance. Members are expected to have this payment reach the Society's Treasurer promptly and free of charge. The Treasurer will then send the member a receipt, in the form of a counterfoil, for the sum paid.

If a member neglects to forward his monthly subscription, he will be sent by post a formal demand for this sum fifteen days after its due date has passed; in this case he will be charged with the postage costs incurred by the Treasurer. Any member who fails to pay three monthly subscriptions in a row, without having accounted for this delay, will ipso facto have his membership in the Society cancelled fifteen days after the date of the final letter sent to him to demand his unpaid subscriptions. A monthly subscription is due even for fractions of a month.

Any member who resigns from the Society must nonetheless pay all the subscriptions that are due. Resignation must always be announced in writing, the communication being both dated and signed, and addressed to the Society's Treasurer.

ARTICLE 4 — Members of the Society are divided, according to their professional specializations, into five sections, which comprise:

1st, painting;
2nd, sculpture;
3rd, architecture;
4th, engraving;
5th, drawing, preliminary cartoons, watercolor, pastel, miniatures, stained glass, enamel, porcelain, and faience.

ARTICLE 5 — A member may belong to several sections.

ARTICLE 6 — The Committee may bestow the title of honorary member on those persons who have rendered important services to Art or to the Society. This title does not, however, confer the right to take part in the Society's General Assemblies.

ARTICLE 7 — The Society's registered capital comprises:

1. the monthly subscriptions and joining fees;

2. a sum paid by each artist exhibiting with the Society, which cannot be greater than 10 francs, nor smaller than 5 francs, regardless of the number of works formally accepted for exhibition.

Nonetheless, members resident outside the regions of Seine and Seine-et-Oise are exempted from paying this sum from the date when they have had a full year's membership of the Society;

3. all interest accruing on the capital belonging to the Society;

4. the income from exhibitions;

5. the income from fines imposed by the Committee (Article 20).

ARTICLE 8 — The Society's resources may be allocated to:

1. The organization and administration of exhibitions. To this end a special fund of 10,000 francs will initially be raised on the basis of the Society's primary resources and placed in a public account; if this fund has been drawn on, the sum drawn out will be repaid as soon as possible;

2. The acquisition and expenditure on items of furniture and the like, as approved by the Committee;

3. The creation and maintenance of a reserve fund that will be placed in a public account, intended to cover any unforeseen expenditure;

4. The reimbursement of exhibiting fees to Society members who have paid at least two years' subscriptions when the reserve fund has exceeded 10,000 francs;

5. The payment, once every three years, starting from the 31st December following the creation of a special exhibiting fund of 10,000 francs, of a fifth of the profits from this three-year period to the Society's members, to be shared between them on a pro rata basis reflecting the relative length of membership within this three-year period (the length of an individual's membership being calculated from the date on which he was last admitted to the Society). A member who has resigned or whose membership has been cancelled during this period has no right to any reparation;

6. General expenses of every sort.

ARTICLE 9 — The administration of the Society is entrusted to a Committee composed of 15 members chosen from among those belonging to the Society who are French nationals and who have a free mandate. The Committee will be appointed by a majority vote of the Society at its General Assembly.

ARTICLE 10 — The Committee will remain in office for two years from the date of its election. Those members who have already served on the Committee are eligible for re-election.

ARTICLE 11 — The Committee may also appoint a Treasurer, his duties being specified in the relevant administrative regulations. The Treasurer will be nominated by the Committee following the outcome of a majority vote; he may be replaced by the Committee in the same fashion.

However, in as far as the financial situation of the Society allows it to have a paid Treasurer, a member of the Committee will serve in this role. His nomination and his replacement will take place following the procedure outlined above.

ARTICLE 12 — If, as a result of a post falling vacant, a death, a resignation, or any other impediment, the Committee is reduced to less than 12 members before the expiration of its term of office, the replacement of the missing member(s) will take place according to the procedure prescribed in Article 9. The new member(s) will serve in this capacity for as long as the member(s) he/they replaced would have done. . . .

"Exposition des Indépendants"

ROGER MARX
Le Voltaire — Paris, 10 December 1884

–

The Société des Artistes Indépendants, of which we had a fairly negative memory from last summer's Salon des Refusés, has brought together three hundred pictures in the Pavillon de Paris on the Champs-Élysées, and is showing them from 10 December in aid of the cholera victims.

We are all aware of the cruel misfortunes that are calling for relief, so this is not the moment to be too severe with those who are trying, in their own way, to contribute to a worthy cause.

Under any other circumstances, however, this kind of indulgence would be out of the question. I would have had to stress the mediocrity of the submissions, send a goodly number of these so-called painters back to school to learn the elementary rules of drawing, and declare loud and clear that independence is not to be equated with ignorance.

Today I shall leave to one side the unpracticed ones who would have shown better judgment by not taking part, and save my attention for a small group, truly deserving of the name artists, whose work endows the exhibition—quite apart from its charitable intentions—with a semblance of interest.

Most of those making up this group—Messrs. Seurat, Signac, Guillaume [Guillaumin], Angrand and Dubois-Pillet—come to us, more out of fashion than conviction perhaps, via Impressionism. Without ineptness, and even with a certain accuracy, they apply the system of multicolored brushstrokes so dear to Mr. Pissarro. Nonetheless, there is, among the Indépendants, one who stands out: during the 1882 Salon I praised an excellent charcoal portrait by Mr. Seurat, which I take pleasure in seeing again here, accompanied by a set of studies and a landscape of a remarkable, ethereal transparency, bathed in the brightness of a hot summer sun. Here we have art that is straightforward, sincere and revelatory of a deep conviction, one that I find regrettably absent from the work of certain "committed Impressionists."

If we continue to include under this latter sobriquet artists able to catch nature's spectacle in a few brushstrokes, Mrs. Berriat-Blanc and Mr. Cross belong to the same school. In large, spirited sketches they have reproduced, with quite a degree of success, scenes observed in the country and in the Luxembourg Gardens.

Impressionism aside, in various other genres the witty illustrator Mr. Mesplès, the poet-artist Mr. Duvauchel, the painter of delicate nudes Mr. Schuffenecker, and Mr. Émile Bastien-Lepage are also deserving of praise.

Among the few sculptures, prints and drawings there is little of note apart from a child's head by Mr. L. Savine and a series of illustrations for the *Fables of La Fontaine* [Contes de La Fontaine], engraved with indisputable talent by Mr. Depollier for the artist-publisher Lemonnyer.

There will be objections to the effect that a few successful fragments are not enough in an exhibition of close to three hundred works. However, as I have said, it is not the result but the intention that counts; and one can only approve of those who have undertaken this venture with the generous idea of once again putting art at the service of charity.

Untitled [excerpt]

JEAN LE FUSTEC
Le Journal des Artistes — Paris, 13 December 1884

–

Ah, gentlemen, it's a thankless task being the one to speak the truth while others, bogged down for their own reasons in solid academic doctrine, brush haughtily and unseeingly by. The rebels showing here, the passionate ones who have blazed their own trail, seem to me as interesting as the pioneers of beaten tracks. . . . One appreciates people with the courage of their convictions; and one believes they might just be right. . . .

Here at the Indépendants there are no medals, no official awards. Here the Institut de France means nothing. What counts is freedom, the clash of genres and principles. The real art battle is being fought inside these four walls. And who knows: this may be the key to the future. . . .

The standard-bearers of the old school might be facing up to the dissidents with a heartening display of courage, but they've got their work cut out for them. Among the Indépendants are names like Angrand, Dubois-Pillet and Seurat, and any artist should feel honored to be doing battle with temperaments of this caliber. What these painters see, and express with their brushes, has real content. It's time to stop cultivating collective prejudices and start looking. Because right now the art-buying public is turning a disloyal but tremendously encouraging eye on canvases it never got to see before. . . .

This makes Pissarro's and Renoir's absence all the more disappointing. With their names on the list this would have been a dazzling display of dissent, forcing the official art world to really sit up and take notice. Benighted reactionaries that we are, they had the chance to flood us with light. But it was not to be. Still, Angrand should be thankful, for if the exhibition drives its point home it is thanks to him. His two canvases make him its spearhead, seconded by the more genial but less spirited Dubois-Pillet.

For the curious of Paris the Indépendants' overriding interest lies in what the dissident schools have achieved. Impressionism, Vibrism, call it what you will, the aim remains the same: a quest for truth—the whole truth, just as in a court of law. . . .

Would you like some examples? Let's take Mr. Seurat's picture of the island of La Grand Jatte. It offers an area of convincingly colored lawn and steadily flowing water sparkling with reflected light. The surface is vibrant with the quick dance of little waves, shot through with reflections of the sky and rays of sunlight. The background is well observed, the boat moving slowly, almost sleepily across water calmed by the warm lethargy of summer. Very well done. In the woodland shade the eye skims a verdure of a quite agreeable tint. We shall ignore the tree trunks, however: they make you think of pines stripped of their bark but weighed down with foliage. The color of the water on the left is not emphatic enough, and the trees are thrust into a green that, given the point of view, has trouble rising above the level of the water. The result is that while the movement of the water and the vanishing perspective of the land area have been very well captured by the painter, they are doubtless less explicable for the viewer, who is offered no direct or indirect visual indication that there is living soil beneath these trees, this grass, this river. . . .

The Guillaumin I find by far the best is *Fishing* [La pêche à la ligne], a landscape with no

evening effect but of great delicacy and feeling. His *Portrait* is superbly true to life and very spirited. The same cannot be said, however, for his *Woman Reading* [Lisease]. First the principal motif involves a color too close to that of the frame not to be somewhat jarring. And then the lampshade, intended to be transparent, is of a green crude enough to make the most violent emerald greens look washed out. We can be sure that the flame burning behind that paper was very green too; for if it had been yellow, as in the lamps we're acquainted with, it would have softened this coarse green as it traversed the paper. And now for a word also aimed at Mr. Seurat: why insist on trying to produce paste effects with oils? For what happens is that all the splendor of the colors is sacrificed, and the artist, instead of opting for the strong, vigorous effects only paint can provide, is forced to limit his use of the finest nuances so as not to fall short of his subject.

"Les Artistes Indépendants"
EDMOND JACQUES
L'Intransigeant —Paris, 14 December 1884
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After demonstrating their independence six months ago at the Pavillon de Flore, these excellent Artistes Indépendants have felt the need to do it again at the Pavillon de la Ville de Paris. Are they the same ones? I think so, although there have been splits, and the Indépendants of yesteryear have divided their independence.

Regarding their first venture, I made some pained admissions. I had to admit that the famed independence that serves as their finery and their banner was somewhat up for debate, that they were like many others, that they had masters and models they trailed behind—a long way behind. Here I restate these pained admissions.

These Indépendants are dependent on everybody, as a stroll through the Galerie des Champs-Élysées reveals at once. I saw some very weak Rolls, Cazins of no interest, inferior Pissarros, and Puvis de Chavannes not worth a cent—and the spectacle was a distressing one. Second-rate originality can be forgiven, but there is no excuse for second-rate plagiarism.

Of the two hundred and eighty items in the catalog, I found three or four at most worthy of notice: a portrait by Mr. Seurat that is quite assured, a decorative panel by Mr. Émile Bastien-Lepage, who cultivates pale greens and injects a lightness into his horizons; a landscape by Mr. Schuffenecker; a still life by Mr. Vincent; and an azure plush frame by Mr. Solvet. Before falling ill, that unfortunate, highly gifted young woman Miss Bashkirtseff, recently deceased, had submitted three figures, marked here with a black band; looking at the triptych I reflected on a promise that is no more.

I would be untrue to my own impressions if I drew attention to other canvases. To put it bluntly, nine-tenths of these fantasies belong in the studio, and for the honor of their creators, should never have left it.

This is no way to be independent. All bold gestures captivate me, but the only bold thing about this venture is its call for public approval.

I can't even speak about the sculpture, which does not merit the name. Be assured that it goes against the grain to write these lines; I do not enjoy expressing such harsh judgments, but to put things otherwise would be a betrayal of reason, taste and my conscience. No doubt the reply will be, "You're harming the cholera sufferers." It's true that this regrettable event has been organized in favor of the plague victims, but this is its sole extenuating circumstance. So go along and do some good—but tell yourself that it's for the victims' children, and not at all for painting.

"Exposition de la Société des Artistes Indépendants"
GUSTAVE GEFFROY
La Justice — Paris, 17 December 1884
–

This exhibition by the "Société des Artistes Indépendants" needs to be spoken about, and frankly. If the press is too ready to accept the jokes organized by groups of hoaxers-painters, Paris will soon degenerate into a dreadful shambles. And first off, what are they "independent" of? It just isn't worth it to rally around the flag flown by Degas, Miss Cassatt, Raffaëlli, Pissarro and their friends, breaking with artists who accept a state-funded studio, only to expose the series of clichés currently on view at the pavilion lent by—instead of the state—the City of Paris. Frankly, I don't feel up to going into the details of this endless accumulation of platitudes and pastiches. Once I've given a mention to Lançon's animals, Mr. Dubois-Pillet's canvases and fans, Odilon Redon's visionary drawings, Messrs. Seurat and Signac's landscapes, and Mr. Guillaumin's pastels, you'll forgive me if I save my ink for another occasion. And if there is any sign of promise here that I have overlooked, I beg the mistaken artist's pardon.

This "Salon d'Hiver" has been organized to help the cholera victims. The intention is praiseworthy, and I chide myself for harming such a good cause, but it would be too easy to pass off bad painting under the guise of charity. So, dear readers, go along, leave your offering at the door and enter if you must.

"Exposition des Artistes Indépendants"
R. DOS SANTOS
Le Moniteur des Arts —Paris,
19 December 1884
–

A benefit exhibition by a group of independent painters and sculptors has just opened for the Paris cholera victims. The City of Paris could hardly do less than make its pavilion on the Champs-Élysées available to artists whose intentions were so praiseworthy.

Once they had the premises, all the Indépendants had to do was set about filling them.

In passing, it seems that one must not confuse the Indépendants at the Champs-Élysées pavilion with the Indépendants who showed at the Tuileries pavilion last June.

The artists making up the two groups have nothing in common but their name. Apart from that, they are all equally independent, that is to say they all profess a cult of absolute freedom and contempt for art juries of all kinds.

And so we are about to launch ourselves onto this sea of independence and revolt in search of the best wrecks we can find.

04

Salon d'Automne

Paris, 1905

LOCATION AND DATES
Grand Palais des Champs-Élysées, Paris,
18 October–25 November 1905

ORGANIZER
Société du Salon d'Automne

ITINERARY
None

ARTISTS
Partial list: Albert André, Paul Baignères, Jeanne Baudot, Jacques Beurdeley, Léon Bonhomme, Pierre Bonnard, Georges Bouche, Émile-Antoine Bourdelle, Breal, Daniel Putnam Brinley, Patrick Henry Bruce, Rembrandt Bugatti, Simon Bussy, Theo Butler, Charles Camoin, Marie-Paule Carpentier, Eugène Carrière, Paul Cézanne, Emilie Charmy, Jules Chéret, Camille Claudel, Henri-Edmond Cross, Béla Czóbel, Daum, Louis Dejean, Robert Delaunay, André Delpey, Paul Deltombe, Marie-A. Demagnez, Maurice Denis, Jean-Julien Denisse, André Derain, Émile Derré, Jules Desbois, Karl Edvard Diriks, Kees van Dongen, Raymond Duchamp-Villon, Georges Dufrenoy, Robert Dupont, Eugène Durenne, Achille Duvré, Georges d'Espagnat, Jules Flandrin, Jean-Louis Forain, Fouquet, Othon Friesz, Pierre Girieud, Charles Guérin, Armand Guillaumin, Laure Hayman, Margarethe Heisser, Henri Hélis, René Georges Hermann-Paul Ernest-Marie Herrscher, J.-K. Huysmans, Jean-Auguste-Dominque Ingres, Alexej Jawlensky, Frantz Jourdain, Wassily Kandinsky, Gerald Kelly, Marguerite van Bever de La Quintinie, Emmanuel de La Villéon, Charles Lacoste, René Lalique, Pierre Laprade, Marie Laurencin, John Lavery, Alcide Le Beau, Lefèvre, Raphael Lewisohn, Gustave Loiseau, Aristide Maillol, Édouard Manet,

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"Les Artistes Indépendants"

EDMOND JACQUES

L'Intransigeant — Paris, 14 December 1884

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GUISTA

La Justice — Par

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EXHIBITION CATALOG

Salon d'Automne: Catalogue de la 3e exposition, 1905.
Preface by Élie Faure. Paris: Société du Salon d'Automne, 1905.

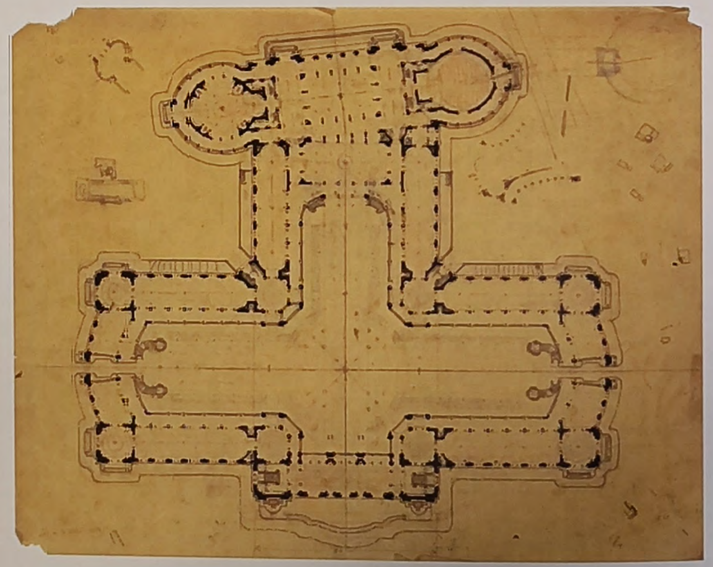
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Number of artists: c. 397
Number of works: c. 1,625
Total attendance: unknown

The Salon d'Automne was established in 1903 as an annual progressive alternative to the two competing conservative salons, but one that would maintain the aesthetic standards that many thought were lacking in the juryless Salon des Indépendants. Presided over by architect Frantz Jourdain—who sought to display the new with the strategic restraint required for commercial success—the autumn salon was the first to stay open at night and to employ electric lighting. In his preface to the 1905 catalog, the critic Élie Faure explained the choice of Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres and Édouard Manet for that year's retrospectives by noting that today's radicals often become tomorrow's classics. Indeed, evidence of such development could be seen in numerous salon entries, including ten paintings by Paul Cézanne and figurative works by Pierre-Auguste Renoir, the honorary Salon president. And in Room VII—soon dubbed the *cage centrale*—the artists who were to be called "Les Fauves," the Wild Beasts, would begin the process anew.

The painters whose works were assembled in this room had all exhibited together the previous spring in the Salon des Indépendants, where Henri Matisse had been head of the hanging committee. Their paintings were dispersed there among 4,269 pieces by 669 artists. It was the decision of a vice president of the Salon d'Automne, Georges Desvallières, to display the Fauves' work together, creating a concentrated presentation that called attention to them as a group. Their collective name is said to have originated with a remark by critic Louis Vauxcelles on seeing these works of aggressively heightened color surrounding a small sculpture of a young boy: "Donatello among the Wild Beasts." But this was Gallic wit and not critique, for Vauxcelles was an advocate of Matisse, André Derain, Maurice de Vlaminck, and their fellows. Indeed, despite the public laughter that echoed from Room VII, many of the critics were positive. The Fauves' work was soon shown in advanced galleries, most notably that of Berthe Weill, and Derain and Vlaminck would be financially supported by the important dealer Ambroise Vollard.

← Grand Palais des Champs-Élysées, Paris, c. 1900. Built for the Universal Exposition of 1900, its monumental Beaux-Arts halls housed the yearly Salon d'Automne in 1905. (The first Salon had been held in the Petit Palais in 1903.) It was at the Grand Palais that the work of the Fauves was first displayed together in one room. French president Émile Loubet initially refused to open the 1905 Salon because of what he considered to be the radical nature of many of the works.



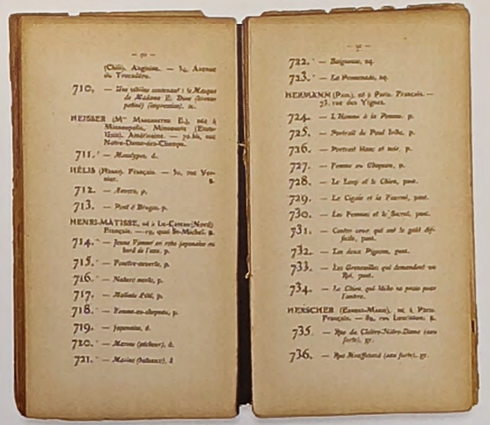
→ Floor plan, Grand Palais, c. 1900. Paintings by the Fauves were presentedl in Room VII, but the exact location of this and other rooms used by ithe Salon are unmarked on the plan. The iSalon d'Automne exhibited c. 1,625 works by c. 397 artists, including painting, sculpture, decorative arts, posters, illustrations, designs, sheet music covers, and architectural plans and models.

↗ Cover of the catalog for the Salon d'Automne, 1905. The catalog includes a checklist of works by all the artists in the exhibition. Élie Faure, a practicing medical doctor and noted art and film critic, wrote a lengthy preface dedicated to the artist Eugène Carrière. (Translation, p. 68.)

↗↗ The catalog includes entries for ten works by Henri Matisse, nos. 714–723.

→ Maurice de Vlaminck exhibited five works, with catalog nos. 1576–1580.

↘ The catalog entries for works by Louis Valtat, nos. 1540–1544, and by Kees van Dongen, nos. 1547–1548.



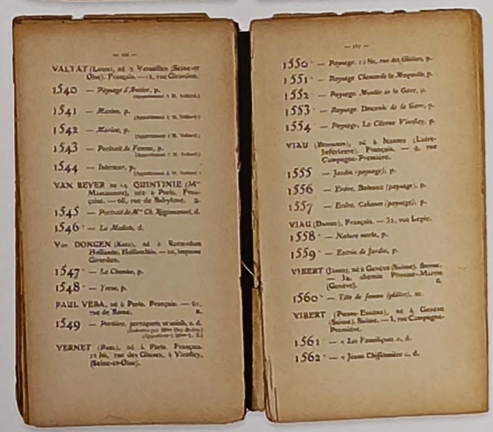
722. — *Baigneuse*, pst.
723. — *La Promenade*, pst.

HERMANN (Paul), né à Paris. Français. — 53, rue des Vignes.

724. — *L'Homme à la Pomme*, p.
725. — *Portrait de Paul Jolle*, p.
726. — *Portrait blanc et noir*, p.
727. — *Femme au Chapeau*, p.
728. — *Le Loup et le Chien*, past.
729. — *Le Cygale et la Fourmi*, past.
730. — *Les Pommes et le Secret*, past.
731. — *Contre coeur qui sait le goût difficile*, past.
732. — *Les deux Pigeons*, past.
733. — *Les Grenouilles qui demandent un Roi*, past.
734. — *Le Chien qui lâche sa proie pour l'ombre*.

HERSCHER (Ernest-Marie), né à Paris. Français. — 89, rue Lauriston, p.

735. — *Rue du Cloître-Notre-Dame (sous forbe)*, gr.
736. — *Rue Montfaucon (sous forbe)*, gr.



VALTAT (Louis), né à Versailles (Seine-et-Oise). Français. — 3, rue Gerardon.

1540 — *Paysage d'Antibes*, p. (Appartement à B. Valtat.)
1541 — *Matinée*, p. (Appartement à B. Valtat.)
1542 — *Matinée*, p. (Appartement à B. Valtat.)
1543 — *Portrait de Femme*, p. (Appartement à B. Valtat.)
1544 — *Intérieur*, p. (Appartement à B. Valtat.)

VAN BEYER (Mme Cornélie CHINTINIE [Mme Maurice]), née à Paris. Française. — 68, rue de Babylone, p.

1545 — *Portrait de Mme Ch. Rigaumont*, d.
1546 — *La Modiste*, d.

Mme DONGEN (Kees), né à Rotterdam (Hollande, Hollandia). — 101, boulevard Gervaisais.

1547 — *La Chemise*, p.
1548 — *Torse*, p.

PAUL VERA, né à Paris. Français. — 62, rue de Rome.

1549 — *Portières, portraits et intérieur*, d. d. (Appartement à Mme Vera Boulay.) (Appartement à Mme L.)

VERNET (Paul), né à Paris. Français. — 16 bis, rue des Ghamps, à Vitry-sur-Seine, (Seine-et-Oise).

1550 — *Paysage*, 2 t. — 80, rue des Glacières, p.
1551 — *Paysage Chemin de la Maquisille*, p.
1552 — *Paysage. Matin au la Gare*, p.
1553 — *Paysage. Descente de la Gare*, p.
1554 — *Paysage. La Citerne Versailles*, p.

VIAU (Hyacinthe), né à Nantes (Loire-Inférieure). Français. — 3, rue Campagne-Première.

1555 — *Jardin (paysage)*, p.
1556 — *Entrée, Bateaux (paysage)*, p.
1557 — *Etoiles, Cabanon (paysage)*, p.

VIAU (Daniel), Français. — 21, rue Lepic.

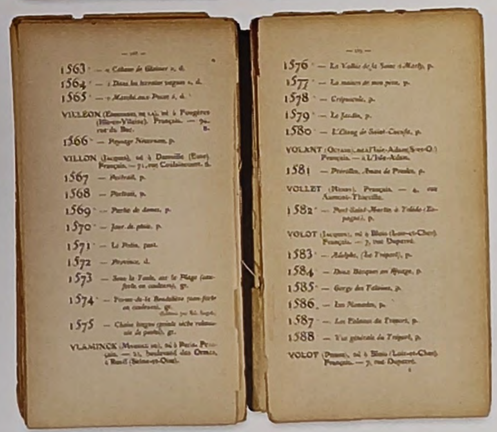
1558 — *Nature morte*, p.
1559 — *Entrée de Jardin*, p.

VIBERT (Jules), né à Genève (Suisse). Bureau. — 34, chemin Prieuré-Malpas (Genève).

1560 — *Tête de femme (pâtelle)*, aq.

VIBERT (Pierre-Eugène), né à Genève (Suisse). Suisse. — 3, rue Campagne-Première.

1561 — *Les Funérailles*, d.
1562 — *Jeune Chefonnière*, d.



1563 — *Colonne de Glaisner*, d.
1564 — *Dieu, les terrestre tuguon*, d.
1565 — *Matelot aux Pouet A*, d.

VILLEON (Emmanuel, né [dit] né à Puygiron [Rhône-y-Vilaine]. Français. — 70, rue du Bac.

1566 — *Paysage Nouveau*, p.

VILLON (Jacques), né à Damville (Eure). Français. — 31, rue Caulaincourt, 6.

1567 — *Portrait*, p.
1568 — *Portrait*, p.
1569 — *Portrait de femme*, p.
1570 — *Jour de pêche*, p.
1571 — *La Prière*, past.
1572 — *Physionos*, d.
1573 — *Sous la Forêt, sur le Plage (sanguine au conderon)*, gr.
1574 — *Pierre de la Bouchaire (sanguine au conderon)*, gr.
1575 — *Chaise longue (grande sèche volonté de pastel)*, gr.

VLAMINCK (Maurice de), né à Paris. Français. — 62, boulevard des Ormes, à Rueil (Seine-et-Oise).

1576 — *Le Vallée de la Seine à Marly*, p.
1577 — *La maison de mon père*, p.
1578 — *Crépuscule*, p.
1579 — *Le Jardin*, p.
1580 — *L'Etang de Saint-Cucufa*, p.

VOLANT (Octave), né à Toir-Adam (Seine-et-O.) Français. — à L'Isle-Adam.

1581 — *Provelles, Bords de Prosles*, p.

VOLLET (Pierre), Français. — 4, rue Aumont-Thiéville.

1582 — *Pont Saint-Martin de Tolède (Espagne)*, p.

VOLOT (Jacques), né à Blois (Loire-et-Cher). Français. — 7, rue Duperré.

1583 — *Adolphe, (Le Trapeur)*, p.
1584 — *Deux Barques en Afrique*, p.
1585 — *Gorge des Talouses*, p.
1586 — *Les Nomades*, p.
1587 — *Les Palmiers du Trapeur*, p.
1588 — *Vue générale du Trapeur*, p.

VOLOT (Pierre), né à Blois (Loire-et-Cher). Français. — 7, rue Duperré.

A selection of paintings from the Salon d'Automne, 1905:

←← Édouard Vuillard
The Desk [Le bureau], 1896
Distemper on canvas
83 ½ × 29 in (212 × 75 cm)

Music [La musique], 1896
Distemper on canvas
83½ × 60⅝ in (212 × 154 cm)
Two of four decorative panels by Vuillard exhibited at the Salon d'Automne, these scenes have the calm, atmospheric and stylized flatness characteristic of his work. Although the focus of the Salon d'Automne was on current artistic production, these paintings by Vuillard were among the older works also on view.

← Eugène Carrière
Tenderness [Tendresse], 1905
Oil on canvas
51⅛ × 37¾ in (130 × 96 cm)

←← Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres
The Turkish Bath [Le bain turc], 1862
Oil on canvas on wood
diam. 42½ in (108 cm)

↙ Henri-Charles Manguin
The Siesta [La sieste], 1905
Oil on canvas
35 × 46 in (89 × 117 cm)
Reminiscent of Titian's *Venus of Urbino* or Ingres's *Grande Odalisque*, Manguin's sleeping figure is a classical subject re-imagined through Fauvist eyes. This work was most likely painted in St. Tropez, where Manguin, Charles Camoin, and Albert Marquet spent the spring of 1905.

↙↙ André Derain
The Drying of Sails [Le séchage des voiles], 1905
Oil on canvas
32⅜ × 39¾ in (82 × 101 cm)
Derain's freely handled and brightly lit harbor scene of beached boats is exemplary of the early Fauvist style, creating glowing works by combining vivid blues, reds, and yellows. In the summer of 1905 Henri Matisse invited Derain to join him in Collioure, a port town in the south of France. Many of the nine works exhibited by Derain were created during this period.

↙ Albert Marquet
Harbor at Menton [Port de Menton], 1905
Oil on canvas
25⅝ × 32⅛ in (65 × 81.5 cm)
Marquet's use of color was typically less dramatic and more representational than that of his contemporaries Derain or Manguin. His finest compositions, such as this view of the harbor at Menton in the south of France, were distinguished by his skill in capturing the effects of natural light.

↘ Félix Vallotton
The English Woman [L'anglaise], 1905
Oil on canvas
45⅝ × 31⅞ in (116 × 81 cm)

→→ Albert Marquet
Matisse in the Studio of Manguin
[Matisse dans l'atelier de Manguin], 1905
(also known as *Nude in the Studio*
[Nu dans l'atelier])
Oil on cardboard
39⅜ × 28⅛ in (100 × 73 cm)
Marquet's interior scene incorporates both the distinct brush strokes of the Fauve style and the contrasting dots of color characteristic of the Pointillist movement that peaked in the 1890s. This painting reflects the close relationships among the Fauves, especially Marquet and Matisse, who often painted together in a building on the Quai St. Michel in Paris.

↘ Henri Rousseau
The Hungry Lion Throws Itself on the Antelope [Le lion, ayant faim, se jette sur l'antilope], 1905
Oil on canvas
79⅜ × 118⅛ in (201.6 × 301.6 cm)

↓ Henri Matisse
Woman with a Hat
[Femme au chapeau], 1905
Oil on canvas
31¼ × 23½ in (79.4 × 59.7 cm)
Gertrude and Leo Stein purchased this portrait of Matisse's wife from the Salon and installed it in their home, an influential meeting place of the Parisian avant-garde. Matisse depicts the sitter in rough, painterly blocks of vibrant color, and a dark outline loosely defines her voluminous hat and dress.

↘↘ Georges Rouault
The Killing Game [Jeu de massacre], 1905
Watercolor, Chinese ink, and gouache on paper
20½ × 26 in (52 × 66.3 cm)
This dense composition is dominated by a row of figures rendered in swift strokes of ink with washes of varying intensities of blues, greens, and reds. Although Room VII was declared the *cage centrale*, works by other artists associated with Fauvism were dispersed throughout the Salon; this painting by Rouault, for example, was exhibited in Room XVI.

↓ Article on the Salon d'Automne, *Le Monde Illustré*, 17 October 1905. This venerable illustrated journal covered current events, politics, and culture, and reproduces six rather conservative works from the Salon d'Automne.

→ Special two-page insert on the Salon d'Automne, *L'Illustration*, 4 November 1905. Excerpts of press reviews are printed below each work of art. The insert features work by the Fauves, including Henri Matisse's *Woman with a Hat* and André Derain's *The Drying of Sails*.

LE SALON D'AUTOMNE

↑↑ Édouard Dujardin, "The Opening of the Salon d'Automne—Toasts," 1905. This ink-and-crayon sketch by the Symbolist critic Dujardin caricatures the main protagonists of the Salon, identified from left as artist Eugène Carrière, Dujardin, architect Frantz Jourdain—the Salon's principal organizer—and artist Georges Desvallières, the Salon's vice president.

↑ Albert Guillaume, "At the Salon d'Automne," *Le Rire*, 11 November 1905. The caption reads: "'Just because some people are having fun, it doesn't mean other people should find it funny.' (Posthumous thought from Monsieur Ingres.)" The conversation follows:
—"Léonie, whatever's wrong with you?"
—"I… I… I came here for a laugh and I'm h-holding back!"

↑↑ Kees van Dongen, "Salon d'Automne," *L'Indiscret*, 1 November 1905:
— "My dear friend, I'd really like your opinion of my picture!"
— "Frankly, my poor friend, since you've asked me, it's worthless!"
— "I know, I know your opinion's worthless, but I'd like to have it all the same!"

↑ Kees van Dongen, "At the Salon d'Automne," *L'Indiscret*, 8 November 1905:
SHE — "So you don't like the painting?"
HE — "I do, but not very much. It should be hardly noticeable: just a little lipstick and a touch of eyeshadow."

Salon d'Automne [exh. cat.]
Preface [excerpt]
ÉLIE FAURE
Paris, 1905

—

. . . . From the very threshold the polyphony of life is there to welcome us. The Salon d'Automne has done away with soul-destroying categories. It is like a spiritual garden whose commingling of all flowers possesses the natural harmony that light, space, and the secret rhythm of things impose on the street, the shifting sky, the tedious plains, the sea, throngs of people and vast lonely expanses. Every work of art and every group of works of art must be a small universe. "Genre" is unknown here: this is the jumbled order of life. The marble statues, bronzes, clumps of dark vegetation, rocks, pots, seeds and fruit, jewels, silver rivers, lakes, and dewfalls of precious stones all live in time with the breath of symphonies, illuminated by paintings whose pastel-dust whirls in the rays of light. There remains only the vast world and, facing it, the individual who reacts according to his own criteria and expresses, in the language that comes naturally to him, the idea bursting forth from his mix of sensations. Amid this untroubled harmony the young exhibition completely sheds the revolutionary countenance most of its participants adopt when one encounters them individually. The exhibition looks like a combined endeavor all the more expected and necessary in that, following mysterious, atavistic pathways, it has joined forces with the individual efforts of some of the great departed—Puvis yesterday, Ingres and Manet today—whose oeuvres, at every Salon d'Automne, assert the inner continuity of human striving.

Through these retrospectives, the Salon d'Automne has set out to demonstrate the ongoing rightness of the revolutionary bid to rejoin tradition. A people's tradition consists in bringing to germination the seeds of its new discoveries: within its deepest nature, on the terrain of the knowledge that constitutes its heritage. But the work of evolution occurs deep in the shadow of the masses, and as soon as it flowers in a few individuals' consciousnesses, it seems revolutionary to majority groups attached to the external forms of their intellectual past. Like Puvis last year, Ingres and Manet provide a gentle assertion that today's revolutionary is tomorrow's classic. . . .

"Le Salon d'Automne" [excerpt]
LOUIS VAUXCELLES
Gil Blas — Paris, 17 October 1905

—

A case of noblesse oblige: to maintain its status the 1905 Salon d'Automne had to be richer and more harmonious, freer and more diverse than the Salon of 1904. And lo and behold, the miracle has come about. Never, in my opinion, have lovers of real painting been offered such a splendid assortment. The 1904 Salon had taken a historical slant, pointing up the evolution of French art over the last thirty years; this one carries on the good work, while decisively soaring to new heights. While the two big spring markets defy even the most dogged visitor—who could withstand the boredom distilled by the suavely fashionable, allegorical and military anecdotes of the Artistes Français? And is the monotonous, Whistlerian distinction that plagues the Société Nationale any less insipid?—here we have, in the fraternal merging of Indépendants and the Salon d'Automne, the dual Salon that alone will reverberate into the future for the critics and the museums. The life that pulses ardently here leaves no room for the formulaic or the fossilized: the striving is messy but driven as a handful of thirty-year-olds, freed of the shackles of their gurus, transcend their gropings and declare themselves the masters of tomorrow.

The Salon d'Automne professes—and for this my warmest congratulations—a horror of the commonplace: its doors are open only to works of integrity. And indeed, one's own faults are preferable to mere reflection of the virtues of others. The essential thing for an artist is to be himself, to provide a sense of newness. And so this year the jury has been exceptionally severe with those candidly cynical types who provide watered-down Impressionism for the bourgeoisie, use the technique of a Sisley or a Pissarro as a kind of trademark, or turn out virtuoso imitations of the modern plein air painters, who seem, as Mr. Jacques Blanche has put it, to be working for the third-floor bedrooms of those Sixth Avenue palaces whose living rooms are already overflowing with Impressionist masterpieces. They set up their easels at the foot of the same cliff at Étretat, or opposite the same rock at Belle-Isle, as Claude Monet. They catch the pretty effect of the bridge at Moret-sur-Loing, celebrated by Sisley. They invent their own new commonplace: Givernyism. If not to drive them out of the temple, it was right at the very least to only half open the doors to them, without enthusiasm; and if not to exclude their submissions, to skim off the cream.

Yet we must beware, for another danger "threatens" our friends: Cézanne is a captivating but redoubtable master; and the decorative simplifications of Paul Gauguin haunt some of the young, obsessively. Be yourselves. Remember the tumultuous Salon des Indépendants of 1905 which, like that famed canvas by Mr. Maurice Denis, could have been titled "Homage to Cézanne"! The "Cézanne feel" was everywhere, scattered wretchedly over two hundred paintings.

Anything rather than conscious or simple-minded pastiche. . . .

ROOM VII
Messrs. Henri Matisse, Marquet, Manguin, Camoin, Girieud, Derain, Ramón Pichot

A bright, bright room for the bold and the outrageous, whose intentions we have to decode while leaving laughter—that most facile form of criticism—to the clever and the foolish. Here we have a whole gang of Indépendants in the form of Marquet and company, a group that sticks together the way Vuillard and his friends did a generation ago.

Let us proceed straight to Mr. Matisse. He's a brave man, for his submission—as he well knows—will meet the same fate as a Christian virgin thrown to the lions. Mr. Matisse is one of today's most robustly gifted painters and could have found easy acclaim; but he prefers to go deeper, ranging through passionate explorations and demanding from Pointillism ever more vibrancy and light. The concern with form suffers, though.

Mr. Derain will alarm, as he alarmed at the Indépendants. I deem him more a poster designer than a painter. Some will see the virulent emphasis of his imagery and the facile juxtaposition of his complementary colors as puerile; but let's admit that his *Boats* [Bateaux] would look good on a child's bedroom wall. Mr. de Vlaminck idealizes! His painting might look scary, but deep down it's harmless. Mr. Ramón Pichot isn't like his compatriots, those dark or exuberant Spanish colorists with little sense of caricature, but the trouble is it's hard to tell if he's a caricaturist himself: he deliberately sets out to amuse, like a Dewambez or a Madrid Jean Veber. Even so, his *Nocturne* is pretty and well observed. Miss Jelka Rosen overdoes the red currant vividness, but her imaginings are decorative.

Mr. Girieud is a lyricist who enlarges and stylizes the hydrangeas, peonies, zinnias, and winter cherries of the *Garden of Torments* [Jardin des supplices]. He is fond of sumptuous fabrics, mosaics, and figures from legend. His palette is flamboyant.

Mr. Manguin: enormous progress by this Indépendant who has left the quick sketch behind and is advancing resolutely toward the big picture. Still too many hints of Cézanne, but nonetheless the stamp of a powerful personality. Such light illuminates this seminude woman dozing on a wicker settee! The sun of St. Tropez caresses her moist, white skin; her heavy body is blissfully at rest in the open air, quickened by the salt breeze from the sea we glimpse through the branches.

Mr. Marquet can never be accused of repeating himself. His joyful series from Agay, St. Tropez and Anthéor bears no resemblance to the desolate riverbanks so admired at the Salon des Indépendants. Here are the red rocks of Agay and Le Trayas rising out of the blue-green of the sea, the metal-green pines, the hills of Estérel, the sailboats in the port of St. Tropez and the pink houses. The style is sweeping and generous, with an original approach to composition that—aside from an almost inevitable similarity to Guillaumin's *Red Rocks* [Rochers rouges]—has little to do with that of other portrayers of the Midi. And yet I find the Paris Marquets more profound and more moving: I find the raw aridity of this cardboard-like Midi off-putting. Maybe Mr. Marquet is better at northern subjects.

Mr. Camoin also went to St. Tropez—they all did, like a flock of migrating birds. This was in the spring of 1905, with a valiant little colony of painters painting and conversing in this enchanted countryside: Signac, Cross, Manguin, Camoin, and Marquet. In nearby Cagnes were d'Espagnat and Renoir, the master. Mr. Camoin builds pictures overflowing with dense, healthy vigor: the seething market of the little port town, the quasi-Japanese dissection of the granite outcrops at Agay, the harbor in Cassis and the orange flutter of reflections in the blue water. Daringly confident contrasts and a clear, direct frankness of color with no cheating; and occasional amusing fantasies, among them this *Parasol*, under which, haloed with multicolored light, an admirable princess smiles as she luxuriates lethargically in her sunbath.

In the center of the room are the torso of a child and a little marble bust, both from the delicately skilled hand of Albert Marque. The guilelessness of these works astonishes in the surrounding orgy of pure color: Donatello among the Wild Beasts. . . .

"La Peinture" [excerpt]
MAURICE DENIS
L'Ermitage — Paris, 15 November 1905

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. . . The Matisse school seems to be the liveliest, the most innovative, and the most talked about.

As soon as you enter the room devoted to Mr. Matisse's work and see the landscapes, figure studies, and sketches, all of them violently colored, you ready yourself to unearth intentions and grasp theories: you feel yourself in the heartland of abstraction. Doubtless, as in van Gogh's most passionate strayings, there remains something of the initial, natural emotion, but what you mostly find here, especially in the case of Matisse himself, is artificiality. Not of the literary kind, as in the quest for some idealized form of expression, nor in the decorative vein of Turkish and Persian carpet makers. No, this is something even more abstract: this is painting free of all contingency, painting in itself, the pure act of painting. All the pictorial virtues other than those of contrasting tone and line—everything not fitting with the painter's agenda, everything rooted in our instinct and in nature, in short all the qualities of representation and sensibility—are excluded from the work of art. This is unambiguously a quest for the absolute. And yet—a strange contradiction, this—a limited absolute, for there is in the world something more relative: personal emotion. May Matisse forgive me if I fail to understand. I know the sharpness of his eye and the sensitivity of his gifts, and I am convinced that I am not wrong in seeking a natural emotion at the genesis of each of his notings, however summary.

What you are practicing, Matisse, is dialectics: you start out with the individual and the multiple, and via *definition*, as the Neoplatonists used to put it—via abstraction and generalization—you arrive at ideas, pictorial noumena. You are satisfied only when all the elements of the work are intelligible to you. In your world nothing must remain predetermined or accidental: you strip that world of everything that does not coincide with the expres-

sive possibilities provided by your reason—as if, in the sphere of your art, you could free the body from necessities that restrict human experience everywhere. Taine said that we understand millions of facts, but only by means of a hundred facts that we do not understand. We have to accept the idea that not everything is intelligible. We have to give up the idea of making a totally new art with our unaided reason. We must put more faith in sensitivity and instinct, and accept without too many qualms much of the experience of the past. Recourse to tradition is our best protection against the thrill of reason and theoretical excess. . . .

"Promenade au Salon d'Automne"

ANDRÉ GIDE

Gazette des Beaux-Arts — Paris,
1 December 1905

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I make no claim to be writing a guide to the Salon d'Automne. All I shall do is chat as I stroll from room to room. I beg your indulgence if I fail to stop for artists I do nonetheless like or admire, fearing that too long a list of names might weary both the reader and myself while I reserve the right to speak of them some other time and at greater length than is possible today.

This year's Salon d'Automne opened under the patronage of Ingres and Manet. An astute grouping of handsome works by the two masters failed to tell us very much that was new, but was lit in a particularly interesting way in this setting and took on its own very real importance as an event. Some visitors, finding only sources of increasing exasperation as they went from room to room, were able to take refuge in the "Ingres room," to restfully contemplate *The Turkish Bath* [Le bain turc] and admire in the collection of drawings used for the details of the work,[1] the patience with which such intensity both sustained and tempered itself. What misconception or what infatuation with paradox drove these wild young painters to identify so closely with such a master?

Manet—well, all right! *Olympia* might be a kind of masterpiece, but it was difficult to forgive her for having at first been shocking.

It is not really surprising if the young painters of today use that scandal as an excuse for being scandalous themselves. After all, Manet was perfectly entitled to a showing at the Salon. But Ingres?

All very well, too, that these young painters should pose as Manet-style anarchists; it was accepted that they should represent something like the far left in painting, but what are they laying claim to with Ingres? To rejecting some excessive artistic paradox and now purely and simply representing Art with a capital 'A'? Maybe carrying on the tradition? One imagines Ingres's indignation and stupefaction were he to be back among us.

In turn I would like to imagine him getting indignant about Manet. And I imagine Manet replying, "Every great painter brings a new way of seeing. What is the use of a new technique if there is no new eye? For a time every great painter imposes this new way of seeing, and it is no easy task. Remember your beginnings, Mr. Ingres. Didn't you create enough of a stir with your portraits of the Riviéres? No one had yet learned to see *like that*. Then people got used to it. These days people can hardly understand the uproar my pictures caused, and were I to show those pictures now only their virtues would be noticed. Every great painter has a dual influence, leaves a dual wake behind him. You have two kinds of disciples: the first has imitated your form, the second has paid heed to your spirit. The former has been insufficiently aware that form without spirit remains dead form, that line and color count only as means of expression. The latter has grasped that if the initial driving force of emotion is removed, all form becomes vain. You will find the former in the other Salons and in the art schools. The latter are here." Slowly Manet would lead him toward Cézanne. And Ingres would pause to look at Maillol.

In a special room on the first floor we have just seen some uneven work by Mr. Rodin: some of the pieces are admirable, and all are palpitating, restless, meaningful and shot through with touching clamor. Then we reach the second floor, and this small[ish] room with, at its center, Mr. Maillol's large seated woman. She is beautiful, but without meaning; this is a silent work. In my opinion we must go back a long way to find as total a lack of concern with anything but the simple manifestation of beauty.

The work of art is not always the outcome of some disclosed emotion. Or at least the emotion can be one arising, not out of the artist himself, but spontaneously or in response to the impact of life; the very material of the work of art, its raw material—colors, resonances, words and rhythms, stone or clay to be modeled—can be enough to plunge the artist into creative rapture.

I find it hard to imagine Rodin looking at a block of marble and wondering, "Will this be a god, or a table, or a washbowl?" But I can readily see him tormented by some visual idea, as Beethoven was by a musical idea or Vigny by a poetic one, and feverishly searching for a way to express his anxiety. I think of the august impatience of Beethoven, battling breathlessly to tame a recalcitrant form. I think of the sheer will of Michelangelo screaming at the marble, "You will submit!"

In contrast with them, I also see serene artists: a Bach, a Phidias, a Raphael. What moves them is first initially and almost solely the beauty of their art. They have nothing precise to *translate* and they seek no other necessity in their work other than its beauty. But emotion lodges itself naturally in this beautiful form, just as Prometheus's life-giving spark lodged itself in the Pandora he had modeled.

The former group are more touching. The work of the latter is more impenetrable, more solid, and weightier.

Thus Mr. Maillol does not begin with an idea, then set out to express it in marble. He begins with the material itself, with clay or stone that we feel he has contemplated at length, then roughed out before finally freeing it with mighty caresses. Each of his works retains something of its elemental weight. True, the statuettes he made last year disturbed me: while their kind of elongated elegance added to their charm, it was only at the expense of their gravity. But here we have the gravest of his works.

I note in passing that up until now, whenever a sculptor has moved away from the Greek canon, it was because he was driven by some need of character or expression. But here, this is not the case at all. And this is what, later, will certainly take on crucial importance in the history of art: the perfect harmony of the human body is obtained using other figures; the equation is no longer the same and yet the harmony remains.

How beautiful the light on this shoulder! How beautiful the shadow on the slope of this forehead! No thought has lined it, no passion tormented these powerful breasts. Nothing but the beauty of planes and lines; no useless detail, no prettification; the noble form remains unpolished and strongly idealized—not spiritualized, as the term is often taken to mean, but simplified, and in such a way that one can sense each muscle without any one of them overasserting itself. The weightiness here is admirable: massiveness—the heaviness of the head resting on the arm—the imposing massiveness of the shoulder.[2]

Were it not that Mr. Vuillard awaits, I would not leave Mr. Maillol.

Anarchy reigns. For each new artist one has to shape a new aesthetic. This is not the moment for deciding whether this is a good or a bad thing. But how interesting our period is! Perhaps no other has ever seemed so powerful and diverse. I wonder how the critics of the future will find a plane on which to situate personalities as independent as Gauguin, Cézanne, Renoir, Degas, and Monet. By what criteria will one intuit their being "of the same period?"

But to return to Mr. Vuillard's panels. I do not know what to like most here. Perhaps Mr. Vuillard himself. He gives an intimate account of himself. I know of few works in which conversation with the creator is more direct. This is due, I think, to the fact that his brush never frees itself from the emotion guiding it, and that for him the external world always remains a justification for self-expression and a ready means of achieving it. And this primarily because he speaks in a very low voice, as a confidence demands, and we lean closer to listen.

Neither romantic nor haughty, his melancholy is discreet and wears everyday garb; it is caressingly tender—timid, I would almost say, if the word could be equated with such complete mastery. Indeed, despite the achievement, I sense in him the charm of disquiet and doubt. He never proposes a color without softening it with a subtle, exquisite follow-up. Too sensitive to assert, he insinuates—in these two big "landscapes with figures," with an indefinable crimson purple—but does so with such assurance that his crimson, while still astonishing, seems necessary. There is no striving for effect, just a constant need for harmony: an intuitive grasp of correlations that results in each color unexpectedly explaining the one next to it, creating a reciprocal avowal.

Above all I admire the right-hand panel, never tiring of its reclining woman. What grace exists in this elusively drawn face! What softness and abandon in this dress! What tonal precision lies in the purple hint of her rocking chair. Then there are the proportions of the clouds above her, and their placing, and the arabesques of the garden paths and the tree trunks . . . would serve no purpose to spell out my pleasure; I prefer to cut it short and move on.

How does one convey the appeal of Mr. Bonnard's canvases to those unresponsive to them? The triumph of wit—mischievousness, even—over reason renders the composition of each of these works bizarrely new and exciting. Scrutiny and analysis in no way exhaust the aesthetic amusement one draws from them, for it emerges from the very color, and the drawing, and not from any explicable ingeniousness. Whether he is painting a bus, a dog, a cat, or a stepladder, his very touch retains a cheekiness quite independent of the subject.

But to see Mr. Bonnard only as a humorist would be to belittle him. Uneven, inquiring, inventive and never dull, he sometimes achieves true excellence. Two of the pictures on show this year, the *Tub* and the *Dressing Room* [Cabinet de toilette], are among his best ever, but in spite of its flaws I am even more taken with the large *Sleep* [Sommeil]. On a wildly unmade bed that exudes an animal heat lies an ambiguous human creature more or less in the pose of the Borghese Hermaphrodite. The lower body is evocatively illuminated, the light then shading off onto the small of the back. The upper body seems to undulate in shadow, flaccid and uncertain, as if bereft of all inner structure. I prefer to think that it would have been easy for Mr. Bonnard to have put everything more firmly "in the right place," but that this was not his concern. One would say that he immediately jettisoned everything others could do well and set out to excel where others would falter. This undoubtedly makes his painting more personal, but is it not one of the regrettable drawbacks of our time that we are capable of recognizing an artist's personality only when some imperfect or unfinished work overstates it? Is it not this that so often leads an artist to halt a work still in its early stages, hesitate to take it further, and part company with it prematurely? I can appreciate that Mr. Bonnard detests the kind of academic perfection that so often makes mediocrity the high road to success, but instead of resorting to these willful shortcomings, would he not make his case more skillfully with a different concept of perfection and, in the midst of so many delightful rough drafts, with a few works that *are* perfect—in an original way? . . .

In a conciliatory vein I willingly admit that Mr. Henri Matisse has unequaled natural gifts. But where he had previously offered us pictures full of marvelous verve and energy, the ones he is presenting here look like expositions of theorems. I spent a lot of time in this room. I listened to the passersby and when I heard them cry out, "This is madness!" at the sight of a Matisse, I felt like replying, "No, quite the opposite. It's the product of theorizing." Everything in them can be deduced and explained, with no scope for intuition. Indubitably, when Mr. Matisse paints this woman's forehead apple green and this tree trunk a strong red, he can tell us, "It's because—." For this is reasoned painting—rationalized, even. How far we are here from the lyrical excess of van Gogh! And from the wings I hear, "All tones *must* be excessive" and "The enemy of all painting is gray" and "The artist must never be afraid of over doing things."[3] Mr. Matisse, you've let yourself be influenced.

Moreover, I understand how, when you see "the others" timidly create the illusion of style by using the dead language of transitions to excuse and underpin a supposed boldness—clinging to line and contour, never giving up a tint but rather enhancing it, or simply darkening it when shadow is called for—I understand how you were pushed to the limit. "To write well," Montesquieu once said, "one must dispense with the transitional ideas." But craft does not demand an end to syntax: on the contrary, long live he who can pay tribute to even the most modest usages and reveal the full value of the least conjunction. Art does not reside in extremes; it is something *tempered*. But tempered by what? By reason, of course! But not rationalizing reason . . . Let us seek guidance elsewhere.

1. Some of these were reproduced in the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, 1894, vol. II, pp. 179 and 371. As for the picture itself, for some months now Mr. Coraboeuf, Ingres's best-accredited engraver, has been working on a worthy interpretation that the *Gazette* intends to publish soon.
2. In Montauban I copied down what Ingres had written below a drawing: "This beauty that charms, transports, and conveys the details of the human body—whose members are, so to speak, like columns—thus do the masters of the masters."

3. From Delacroix's *Journal*, quoted by Mr. Signac in *D'Eugène Delacroix au néo-impressionnisme*, Paris, 1899.

"Le Salon d'Automne"
CHARLES MORICE
Le Mercure de France — Paris, 1 December 1905

As I scrutinized the Salon d'Automne I understood the almost unanimous expressions of regret that have preceded Mr. Loubet's retirement. For he truly was the president of France we needed—and still need—and I fear that, should he leave us, the senators and deputies will not offer us his like. Who, when it comes to appealing ex cathedra to his age, could equal him in speaking endlessly and to no purpose, in lavishing encouragement on ventures the public is already wild about, and in ignoring the passionate struggle currently being waged—of the paths trodden and sanitized by countless hordes of lackeys—by a handful in whom the ineluctable future gleams and resounds? Who could equal him at sticking to his post, that of the lifeless chief executive of a neutered, hollow, bankrupt society? This eponymous hero of the classes who governed us refused to grace the opening of the Salon with his presence. *Mystified* last year during a wretched stroll through the galleries of the Grand Palais, he swore never to be caught out again. And in 1905 he has been as good as his word. The Artistes Français salon, okay; and the Nationale, why not? But the Salon d'Automne? Could it be that the president's personal aesthetics were incompatible with the Salon"s theories and works? A pretty fanciful supposition: there's nothing personal about Mr. Loubet. As the perfect, perfectly elusive representative of the wide-ranging conformism that characterizes our time, he quite logically feels a repugnance for individuality that speaks its mind, strives, desires, and lives.

This is, as I have said, very logical—and very funny.

Rodin, Carrière, Cézanne, Renoir, Redon, Raffaelli, Willette, Miss Claudel, Ingres, Manet: we mystify Mr. Loubet by inviting him to an exhibition where artists like these are represented by some of their handsomest works.

But enough. I'm endowing a minor absence with an importance it doesn't have. Nonetheless, it's saddening to think of the good "someone holding that office" could do were he well informed—and the ills he could prevent. You're aware of how the press played up and reused the disdainful presidential gesture for its own purposes. And how illustrated magazines whose readership includes the entire universe had their fun travestying some of the most interesting works on show, or ironically and treacherously signaling the worst as the most significant; only a small-scale furor, but one the goodwill or even the simple impartiality of the president could have averted.

I don't really think that violent criticism, even when based on the facts, has ever changed anyone's mind. What's the use of trying to discourage pointless or even negative attacks that time will very swiftly deal with, above all when they don't even convey the illusion of having carried the day? Let's leave it to the honestly naïve to get worked up about the Douanier Rousseau's unjustified place in the Salon, especially as it would be unfair to say that he is totally without merit: his painting might not be very necessary, but is it any more useless than that of Mr. Lefèvre? There are even certain decorative qualities in this picture with its over-long label (*The Hungry Lion Throws Itself on the Antelope, Devours It* [Le lion, ayant faim, se jette sur l'antilope, la dévore] etc.) and its resemblance to a tinted, blown-up woodcut from an old German Bible. In any case, Mr. Rousseau isn't the kind to be daunted, and he's hardly changed since that moment long ago when Gauguin dryly presented him to a somewhat disconcerted Degas as "a great painter." The good old Douanier at least makes it clear that his mind is made up: he is going to carry forward, and his perseverance does no harm.

On the other hand, what's more serious, and more dangerous, is the blunder being made by gifted artists like Messrs. Bonnard, Vallotton, Hermann-Paul, and d'Espagnat. They have their admirers—among them some true connoisseurs—and their imitators, not all of whom are insignificant. Am I underestimating the charm and rare tonal harmony of Mr. Bonnard's *Seascape* [Marine] and *Landscape* [Paysage]? The enchanting nocturnal appeal of Mr. Vallotton's *Pentheus* [Penthée], *Ancient Evening* [Soir antique]? The wit Mr. Hermann-Paul injects into his pastels? The skill shown by Mr. d'Espagnat in the combinations of lines and colors calculated to suggest a huge stage-set? It is not the effort I take issue with, or the sincerity, but rather the nature of the effort—it is Mr. d'Espagnat's underlying tendencies I am criticizing here—and the mistaken character of the sincerity. To put it all into a few words that might elicit a smile, there's a lack of tenderness and this deficit cancels out a lot of expertise and skill. His figures are artificially, mendaciously graceful. Ugly thoughts underlie the grimaces of Mr. Hermann-Paul's perhaps involuntary caricatures. Mr. Bonnard's *Sleep* [Sommeil], with its sprawling woman, reduces the appearance of the human to that of mere things: this is an exaggerated, thoroughly false still life. Mr. Vallotton's nudes are considered with a cold eye and painted with a stern hand; despite very real touches of beauty, they are ugly. He is all too clearly adhering to a formula against which life rebels.

No doubt Mr. Rouault has real surprises in store for us. Let us hope they are not slow in coming! All informed art lovers hold him in the highest esteem, and most of them are saddened to see him lingering in distressing contemplation of the lowest moral degradation. *Girls* [Filles], *Prostitutes* [Prostituées], *Fairground Entertainers* [Forains], *Amateurs* [Cabotins], *Buffoons* [Pitres]—the titles avow an obstinate pessimism the works do not belie: the somber execution of these wretched visions matches them all too faithfully. Mr. Rouault is going through a dark night of the soul. Yet there may be a feeble glimmer of light: *Dusk* [Crépuscule] is another of his titles—but is this the crepuscule of dusk or dawn?

It would seem that Mr. Henri Matisse delights in disappointing people's hopes. The sincerity of his explorations is unquestionable, but their effect is bewildering. One worries that enormous gifts are being expended for no ultimate profit. Yet while his painting disturbs, his drawings remain reassuring.

05

Ausstellung Künstlergruppe Brücke
The First Brücke Exhibition

Dresden-Löbtau, 1906

LOCATION AND DATES
Showroom of the Karl-Max Seifert Lamp Factory, Gröbelstrasse 17, Dresden-Löbtau, 24 September–c. 31 October 1906

ORGANIZER
Künstlergruppe Brücke (Die Brücke Artists Association): Fritz Bleyl, Erich Heckel, Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, Karl Schmidt-Rottluff

ITINERARY
None

ARTISTS
Cuno Amiet, Fritz Bleyl, Erich Heckel, Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, Emil Nolde, Max Pechstein, Karl Schmidt-Rottluff

EXHIBITION CATALOG
Unpublished; draft by Ernst Ludwig Kirchner

RELATED PUBLICATION
Statement distributed as a leaflet and as a woodcut designed by Ernst Ludwig Kirchner

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
Number of artists: 7
Number of works: 30–50
Total attendance: unknown

905 by four Dresden architecture students—Fritz Bleyl, udwig Kirchner, and Karl Schmidt-Rottluff—Die oth organized exhibitions and published annual print ssionists had created the model for the artist-organized their first show had been in the studio of a famous ionable part of Paris. The initial exhibition of Die ts the image of radical artists displaying their work g—a circumstance often assumed to be typical of fact exemplified by only a small number of the most of advanced art. Early on decorating their walls and niture, the original Brücke artists created a bohemian udios in a working-class district of Dresden. mercial interest in the group's work, and without funds Heckel convinced the Seifert lamp company to allow s first exhibition in the firm's showroom, the design of on as a draftsman. The resulting show, ironically, imitivist and radically expressive sculptures, paintings, amid the decorative fixtures of the bourgeois culture rejected. Despite distribution of Bleyl's striking nnouncing the exhibition, attendance was sparse, as it ecember show of woodcuts mounted in the same space. paved the way for Brücke shows in the Dresden modern Richter, from 1907 through 1909, and of Ernst Arnold, ar, the group exhibited with Berlin's New Secession, and all of the Brücke artists were living in the capital.

3. From Delacroix's *Journal*, quoted by Mr. Signac in *D'Eugène Delacroix au néo-impressionnisme*, Paris, 1899.

"Le Salon d'Automne"

CHARLES MORICE

Le Mercure de France — Paris, 1 December 1905

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As I scrutinized the Salon d'Automne I understood the almost unanimous expressions of regret that have preceded Mr. Loubet's retirement. For he truly was the president of France we needed—and still need—and I fear that, should he leave us, the senators and deputies will not offer us his like. Who, when it comes to appealing ex cathedra to his age, could equal him in speaking endlessly and to no purpose, in lavishing encouragement on ventures the public is already wild about, and in ignoring the passionate struggle currently being waged—off the paths trodden and sanitized by countless hordes of lackeys—by a handful in whom the inelactable future gleams and resounds? Who could equal him at sticking to his post, that of the lifeless chief executive of a neutered, hollow, bankrupt society? This eponymous hero of the classes who governed us refused to grace the opening of the Salon with his presence. *Mystified* last year during a wretched stroll through the galleries of the Grand Palais, he swore never to be caught out again. And in 1905 he has been as good as his word. The Artistes Français salon, okay; and the Nationale, why not? But the Salon d'Automne? Could it be that the president's personal aesthetics were incompatible with the Salon's theories and works? A pretty fanciful supposition there's nothing personal about Mr. Loubet. As the perfect, perfectly elusive representative of the wide-ranging conformism that characterizes our time, he quite logically feels a repugnance for individuality that speaks its mind, strives, desires, and lives.

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Established in June 1905 by four Dresden architecture students—Fritz Bleyl, Erich Heckel, Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, and Karl Schmidt-Rottluff—Die Brücke (The Bridge) both organized exhibitions and published annual print portfolios. The Impressionists had created the model for the artist-organized group exhibition, but their first show had been in the studio of a famous photographer in a fashionable part of Paris. The initial exhibition of Die Brücke more closely fits the image of radical artists displaying their work in an alternative setting—a circumstance often assumed to be typical of the avant-garde but in fact exemplified by only a small number of the most important exhibitions of advanced art. Early on decorating their walls and carving their own furniture, the original Brücke artists created a bohemian atmosphere in their studios in a working-class district of Dresden.

With little commercial interest in the group's work, and without funds to rent a space, Erich Heckel convinced the Seifert lamp company to allow Die Brücke to stage its first exhibition in the firm's showroom, the design of which he had worked on as a draftsman. The resulting show, ironically, placed the group's primitivist and radically expressive sculptures, paintings, drawings, and prints amid the decorative fixtures of the bourgeois culture they so emphatically rejected. Despite distribution of Bleyl's striking lithographed poster announcing the exhibition, attendance was sparse, as it was for the group's December show of woodcuts mounted in the same space. But these exhibitions paved the way for Brücke shows in the Dresden modern art galleries of Emil Richter, from 1907 through 1909, and of Ernst Arnold, in 1910. That same year, the group exhibited with Berlin's New Secession, and by the following year all of the Brücke artists were living in the capital.

↑ Title page, Brücke manifesto, 1906, designed by Ernst Ludwig Kirchner. The group was established in June 1905 by architecture students Fritz Bleyl, Erich Heckel, Kirchner, and Karl Schmidt-Rottluff. According to Heckel, it was Schmidt-Rottluff who suggested the name Die Brücke (The Bridge): "a multilayered word, it wouldn't signify a platform, but would reach out from one bank to another, as it were." (Heckel interview, 1958.) The group dissolved in 1913.

↗ Page two, Brücke manifesto. Kirchner's woodcut of the group's ideological statement was also published in leaflet form, and reads: "With a belief in progress and in a new generation of creators and supporters, we summon all youth together. And, as young people, who bear within themselves the future of humanity, we wish to secure the freedom to live and work as we choose, in opposition to well-established older forces. Everybody who reproduces, directly and passionately, whatever urges him to create belongs to our cause."

Opposite (clockwise from top left):

Fritz Bleyl, poster for The First Brücke Exhibition, 1906. The poster and invitation card were designed following a competition among the Brücke members; Bleyl won for poster design, while Kirchner won for the invitation (middle, right). The police denied permission to display the poster on the grounds that it focused inappropriately on the figure's pubis.

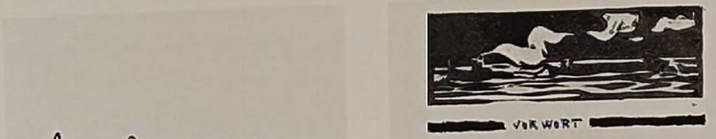
Fritz Bleyl's woodcut, *Walking Nude Girl*, was used in publicity for the exhibition.

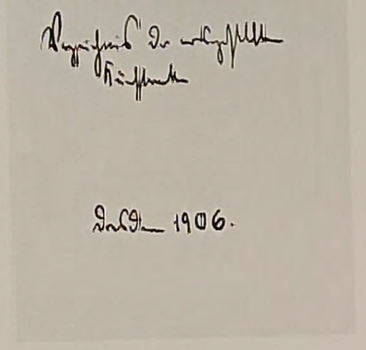
Invitation card to the exhibition by Max Pechstein, titled *Dresden Studio of Karl Max Seifert*.

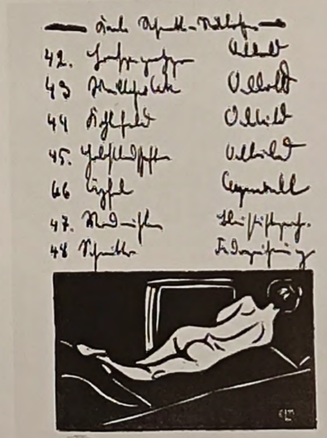
Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, invitation card to The First Brücke Exhibition. This was the winning entry in a competition among Brücke members for design of the invitation card.

Erich Heckel incorporated *Three Nudes* in his design for the invitation card to the exhibition.

Invitation card by Max Pechstein, incorporating his work *Standing Female Nude*.







Four pages from the draft of the catalog (unpublished) for The First Brücke Exhibition, designed by Ernst Ludwig Kirchner. The catalog draft consists of 16 pages, all but 4 of which (1, 3, 5, 9) are blank. The Brücke group did not publish catalogs until 1910; by then the members had organized more than 30 solo, group, and traveling exhibitions.

↖↖ Title page of catalog draft, reading *Verzeichnis der ausgestellten Kunstwerke, Dresden 1906* (List of Exhibited Artworks, Dresden 1906).

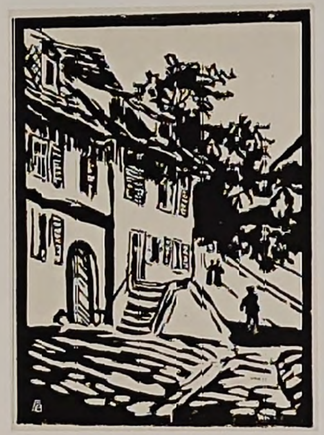
↖ Foreword page, with woodcut by Kirchner.

←← List of works by Fritz Bleyl.

← List of works by Karl Schmidt-Rottluff, with woodcut by Kirchner.

→ Karl-Max Seifert Lamp Factory, Dresden-Löbtau, c. 1906–7. Karl-Max Seifert was a manufacturer of lampshades and light fixtures in Löbtau, a northern working-class suburb of Dresden. Die Brücke member Erich Heckel arranged for the group's first exhibition in the showroom, which he had helped design. Another Brücke exhibition, of graphic works only, took place here from 3 December 1906 to 31 January 1907.

↘ Showroom with installation of The First Brücke Exhibition, Karl-Max Seifert Lamp Factory, 1906. The room featured decorative white lacquered woodwork, fabric-covered walls, a parquet floor, and blue-gray upholstered armchairs. Light fixtures hung from the ceiling, leaving the walls bare for display. A jury set up by the Brücke group determined the works to be included by each artist: woodcuts by Bleyl and Heckel, watercolors by Kirchner, woodcuts and prints by Amiet, paintings by Nolde, sketches and paintings by Pechstein, and paintings, watercolors, and drawings by Schmidt-Rottluff.



← Membership card, Die Brücke, 1906–7, woodcut by Fritz Bleyl. The card reads "1906/Landgerichtsdirektor Schiefler [District Court Director]/Pass Mitglied [Membership Card]/Künstlergruppe Brücke [Artists' group Brücke]." In addition to professional artists, the Brücke group included "passive members" such as Gustave Schiefler: nonprofessionals who financially supported the group with a yearly subscription fee and in return received an annual portfolio of prints. This arrangement proved important in cultivating early patrons of Die Brücke and German Expressionism. Among early passive members were the lamp manufacturer Karl-Max Seifert; Rosa Schapire, an art historian; and the lawyer Schiefler, an important patron of German Expressionism. (Translation of membership invitation, p. 81.)

←← Fritz Bleyl
House with Doorsteps
[Haus mit Freitreppe], 1905
Woodcut
8⅛ × 6¼ in (22.5 × 17 cm)
This was one of three woodcuts distributed in the first Brücke portfolio of prints. In 1906, approximately twenty such portfolios were issued to passive members, containing three woodcuts, one each by Kirchner, Bleyl, and Heckel.

← Erich Heckel
Female Nudes [Weibliche Akte], 1906
Woodcut
7¾ × 5½ in (18.9 × 14 cm)
Heckel contributed this woodcut to the first Brücke portfolio.

↙ Die Brücke letterhead, woodcut by Kirchner, 1905–6. Berlinerstrasse 65 was the address of the group's office in Dresden.

← Erich Heckel, draft of poster for The First Brücke Exhibition, 1906.

Correspondence
KARL SCHMIDT-ROTTLUFF
TO EMIL NOLDE
Dresden, 4 February 1906

–

Permit me to speak right out: The artists' group "Brücke" of Dresden would consider it a great honor to greet you as a member. To be sure—you will know as little of the Brücke as we knew of you before your exhibition at Arnold. Now, one of the aims of the Brücke is to attract all the revolutionary and surging elements—that is what the name, Brücke, signifies. The group in addition annually arranges several exhibitions, which travel throughout Germany, so that the individual artist is relieved from business activity. A further goal is the creation of our own exhibition space—for the time being, only wishful thinking because the funds are still lacking. Now, dear Mr. Nolde, think what you will, we want herewith to pay our tribute to your tempests of color.

–

From Peter Selz, German Expressionist Painting *(Berkeley: University of California Press, 1957), 88. Translation by Peter Selz.*

Membership invitation
MEMBERS OF DIE BRÜCKE
Dresden, 1906

–

The artists' group "Brücke" (based in Dresden) makes an annual presentation to its friends of original prints (etchings, woodcuts, lithographs) by its members. The minimum annual membership fee is 12 marks. All those who wish to support the life and work of the "Brücke" are hereby invited to enroll as passive members of the group at the office address given below and to forward the aforementioned fee. The prints will then be sent to the address supplied.

"Brücke" headquarters
65 Berlinerstrasse
Dresden-Friedrichstadt

"Die Brücke"
RICHARD STILLER
Dresdner Anzeiger — Dresden, 6 October 1906

–

A new artists' group has formed in Dresden taking "Die Brücke" as its name. In their manifesto, these artists call upon the young to unite around the belief in a new generation of creators and patrons: Even more clear than what emerges from these words concerning the artists' goal is the motivation for the founding of yet another, separate group. While the opportunities for exhibiting and art market sales are currently unfavorable, this situation has not yet deprived the flourishing art cliques of their supposed rights. The new group wishes to place the buying public in direct connection with the artists, and plans to have members make an annual presentation to their friends of original prints (etchings, woodcuts, lithographs). The minimum annual members' fee is 12 marks. The "Brücke" has mounted its first exhibition in the showrooms of Karl-Max Seifert's Dresden artists' workshops at 17 Gröbelstrasse, which are decorated in a modern and tasteful manner with white lacquered woodwork and blue-gray upholstery. This show presents oil paintings, watercolors, woodcuts, and etchings. If one regards as "modern" the more or less strict application of the chromatic principles of Pointillism—the use of the unbroken colors of the solar spectrum—then one would have to acknowledge the oil paintings exhibited here as exceptionally "modern." They appear to have emerged from a wild riot of color, from improvisation with uncertain forms, and have either naïve or deeply meaningful titles (*House in the Morning* [Haus am Morgen], *Tired Woman in Autumn* [Herbstmüde Frau]). The works immediately remind one of "fashionable" art heavily dependent on French or Belgian examples and with a hint of Japanese influence, even though they may well "directly and honestly record" the artist's creative desire. But, in that case, we would have to conclude that the artist is, in fact, dependent in his artistic sensibility, and not original—that is to say, not unique. In contrast to this sort of attention-grabbing work, there are the watercolors: owing to their more delicate brushwork, the striking use of color in these pieces achieves an often provocative result that is an end in itself. These are by far the most mature works to be found here, with many sheets of great merit. The technical skill and the capacity to achieve both sculptural and pictorial effects, through the use of black and by means of exploiting the color of the drawing surface, are very evident in the woodcuts (again with Japanese influence, here in the treatment of the figures) and in the etchings (with their feeling for painterly tone). The artists who have so far exhibited as members of "Die Brücke" are E. L. Kirchner, E. Heckel, Fritz Bleyl, K. Schmidt-Rottluff, M. Pechstein, Nolde, and Cuno Amiet. Every two months or so, a new display of work will be mounted, with free entry. We should probably expect the individual aesthetic personalities of these young artists to emerge more prominently and distinctly over time. In spite of their aforementioned absurdities, these talents appear capable of development and they deserve our attention, as does their present undertaking.

"Dresdner Kunstschau II" [excerpt]
OTTO SEBALDT
Sächsische Arbeiter-Zeitung — Dresden, 23 October 1906

–

...A fundamentally very pleasing new arrival on the Dresden art scene is the association "Brücke," a society of enthusiastic young artists, who intend to go their own way independently and self-confidently, without regard to the sort of art that gets passed as faultless by a cautious and prudent Dresden jury. Out there in Dresden Löbtau—in other words so far out of town as to be effectively "invisible"—these young people have made a home for themselves in the workshops of Max Seifert. It remains to be seen whether this is an appropriate location. From the ceilings of the workshop showrooms, themselves very tastefully decorated, dangle hundreds of modern "light fixtures" which are, of course, for sale. Once one has become accustomed to this threatening Sword of Damocles, one sees an exhibition of prints and paintings, not large in scale but in part remarkable, with the character of a Secessionist display. Right from the start our attention is captured by a series of accomplished woodcuts by Fritz Bleyl. I recall first coming across part of this original work in the cellar of the Kunstverein when it had just been rejected by the jury of the Sächsische Kunstausstellung of 1906, and was leading a joyless existence (in the company, as I remarked at the time, of a great deal of indifferent work). Now

this young artist is *himself* exhibiting in public. And, like the other members of the "Brücke," he has every right to do so. Schmidt-Rottluff exhibits landscapes of an "Pointillist" type, although one has to admit that his ability does not quite match up to his intention. There is here no shortage of fire and high spirits—but, as I said, this has not yet been tamed into true artistry. It remains to be seen what the future will bring. Rather better are a number of watercolors and a splendid painting of a spring day on the banks of the River Elbe, all by the same artist. Cuno Amiet has more completely mastered the technique of "Pointillism." His portrait of a man in this style works perfectly when viewed from the requisite distance, and it seems to me good in both execution and characterization. We also find work of high quality in Kirchner's *Path in the Park* [Parkweg], treated in the same manner, as well as in a watercolor entitled *Street Scene* [Strassenbld]. Kirchner's woodcuts certainly have their subtleties; he has found a way, appropriate to the woodcut and very decorative in its effects, of simplifying complex and colorful subjects into just a few planes. In particular, I like his studies of nudes. Max Pechstein has settled on this occasion for two or three decorative, yet nonetheless delicately composed, colored sketches. Nolde is a very deft Impressionist, working in markedly somber colors. His young man in a garden is full of the energy of youth, and this allows us to hope for great things from him in the course of time. Heckel is the third man in the group of woodcutters. His great ability as a caricaturist, his skill in exaggerating whatever is most characteristic in a face, is here revealed in a series of especially spirited woodcuts. As I have said, there is something likeable about the whole group, even if much of their output is still immature. But their aim—"as young people, who bear within themselves the future of humanity, we wish to secure the freedom to live and to work as we choose, in opposition to well-established older forces"—is both a high one, and one worth striving for. We can only hope that a great many young artists now making their own way in the world will join the group, in order to establish the sort of counterforce that is now so necessary in Dresden: a challenge to the power of the local, self-regarding cliquish art "caste"!

Memoirs [excerpt]
FRITZ BLEYL
Zwickau, Germany 1948
–

... I no longer recall who first invented or proposed the name "Brücke," though I think it was Heckel.

Initially the term "artists' group" had been proposed and we had to come to a decision. But we decided against calling ourselves that and, instead, chose "artists' association." The establishment of a new body was debated and then taken in hand with calm self-confidence and a restrained enthusiasm. We embarked upon what, at first, seemed like a hopeless struggle against the forces opposed to us, with great courage and with all the carelessness and audacity of youth. Unexpectedly, we had the unique opportunity of a far from usual exhibition venue. In a northern suburb of Dresden, Dresden-Friedrichstadt, where Heckel and Schmidt-Rottluff lived, a new, young business making specially-designed lighting fixtures—under the direction, I think, of Professor Kreis—had set up a series of medium-sized showrooms in which to display its wares. These rooms had cloth-covered walls, parquet flooring and comfortable armchairs; and, though hanging lamps were suspended from the ceilings, the walls remained bare, thus offering the opportunity to display pictures to advantage. In this case, too, it was probably the resourceful Heckel—who at this point still had a connection with Kreis—who hit upon the happy idea of mounting the first "Brücke" exhibition in these showrooms. The owner of the company agreed with this idea, as such an exhibition was a novelty and, as such, a form of advertising that also promised to serve his interests as an entrepreneur. This event became the first exhibition of prints by the Artists' Association "Brücke." Each of us picked out those of his own works that seemed the most appropriate for this occasion, and we then formed a sort of jury to vote on whether to accept or reject the items put up for inclusion.

A sketch by me was chosen for the poster advertising the show. Reproduced as a lithograph, it showed a young, naked woman drawn in white, and with a chiaroscuro effect reminiscent of a woodcut, set in sharp contrast to a partially orange background. This poster was already striking on account of its unusual, elongated shape: measuring around 75 by 35 cm, it resembled a Japanese scroll painting, intended for hanging on a pillar.

And so, we sought police permission to display this image in public—but this request was refused on the grounds that too much attention was focused here on the figure's un-depilated pubis! People had, of course, to be protected from such sights. Sadly, I no longer have a copy of this poster.

Nonetheless, the exhibition went ahead—albeit without a poster to advertise it—and was mentioned and discussed in the press, naturally, with many a cheap metaphorical expression along the lines of our efforts being a still fermenting cider that would, in time, become clear, etc. And so the "Brücke" had arrived!

–

From Magdalena M. Moeller, ed., Fritz Bleyl: Erinnerungen, Brücke-Archiv, *18 (Berlin: Brücke Museum, 1993), 215–16.*

06

Manet and the Post-Impressionists

London, 1910

LOCATION AND DATES
The Grafton Galleries, 8 Grafton Street, London,
8 November 1910–15 January 1911

CURATOR
Roger Fry

ITINERARY
None

ARTISTS
Paul Cézanne, Henri-Edmond Cross, Maurice Denis, André Derain, Jules Flandrin, Othon Friesz, Paul Gauguin, Pierre Girieud, Vincent van Gogh, Auguste Herbin, Pierre Laprade, Aristide Maillol, Édouard Manet, Henri Manguin, Édouard Mariel, Albert Marquet, Henri Matisse, Pablo Picasso, Jean Puy, Odilon Redon, Georges Rouault, Georges Seurat, Paul Sérusier, Paul Signac, Félix Vallotton, Louis Valtat, Maurice de Vlaminck

EXHIBITION CATALOG
Manet and the Post-Impressionists. Unsigned introduction. London: Ballantyne and Company, 1910.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
Number of artists: c. 27
Number of works: c. 250
Total attendance: c. 25,000

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n Gogh, and Paul Gauguin. By early in the twentieth
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—were being exhibited by galleries and artists societies
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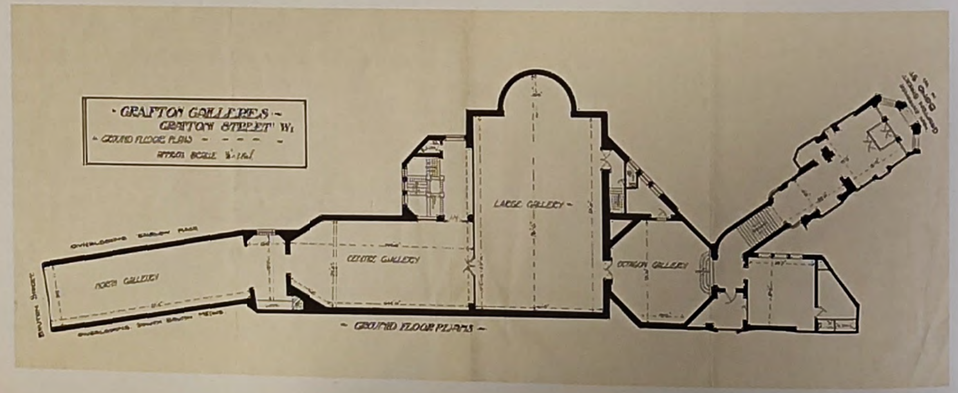
In France, large salon retrospectives had canonized Édouard Manet, Paul Cézanne, Vincent van Gogh, and Paul Gauguin. By early in the twentieth century these artists' works—along with those of the Neo-Impressionists, Fauves, and Cubists—were being exhibited by galleries and artists societies throughout mainland Europe. In England, however, they remained largely unknown to the public. French gallerist Paul Durand-Ruel had sent an exhibition of some three hundred Impressionist paintings to the Grafton Galleries in 1905, but little avant-garde work had been shown subsequently in London until the art historian, critic, and painter Roger Fry mounted this show at the end of 1910. Even though the exhibition provided primarily a reprise of earlier modern art—alongside more recent pieces by Henri Matisse, Pablo Picasso, and their fellows—these works had just appeared on the British scene, and they attracted the kind of vituperation ordinarily reserved for innovative contemporary art.

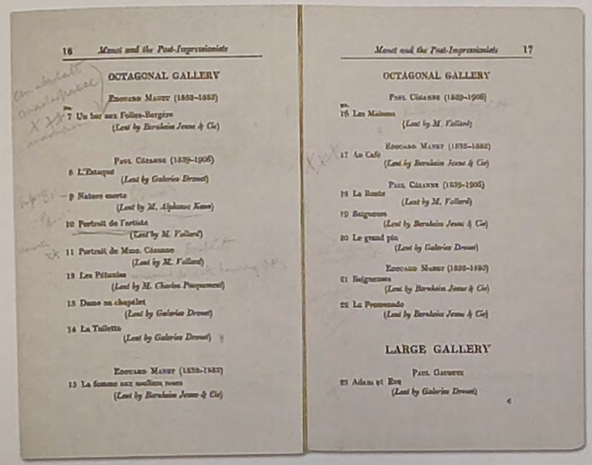
The 1910 Grafton exhibition was put together in great haste as Fry took advantage of an opening in the gallery schedule to exercise his new passion for the artists he would call "Post-Impressionists," for want of a better term. Unlike the organizers of New York's 1913 Armory Show, who visited his second—and much more contemporary—Grafton exhibition in 1912, Fry and his colleagues did not approach artists directly but worked mainly with Parisian dealers (with the noteworthy exception of borrowing twelve van Gogh canvases from the artist's sister-in-law). Fry sought to present the Post-Impressionists as heirs to the formal insights of Renaissance masters, and he hung the paintings to emphasize visual relationships rather than chronology. Such subtleties were lost on most visitors, however, and (like The Armory Show) the exhibition had an incendiary effect on an artistically provincial public, about 25,000 of whom saw it. Perhaps just as important for the national culture as introducing the public to modern art, the exhibition also made local artists, who previously had been considered advanced, appear tame. Thus the British art world was opened to authentic modernism.

↑ The Grafton Galleries, founded 1893, 8 Grafton Street, located off Bond Street, London. Prior to "Manet and the Post-Impressionists," their group and solo exhibitions included the Royal Society of Portrait Painters, the Austrian sculptor Emil Fuchs, and the British painters Ford Madox Brown and George Romney.

↓ Ground-floor plan, Grafton Galleries. Roger Fry filled the octagonal, large, center, and north (referred to in the catalog as "end") rooms of the Grafton Galleries with more than 250 works of art.



↓ Poster for "Manet and the Post-Impressionists," featuring Paul Gauguin's *Poèmes barbares*. The press preview was on 5 November 1910 and the show opened to the public on 8 November 1910.



16 *Manet and the Post-Impressionists*

OCTAGONAL GALLERY

EDOUARD MANET (1832–1883)

7 Un bar aux Folies-Bergère
(*Lent by Bernheim Jeune & Cie*)

PAUL CÉZANNE (1839–1906)

8 L'Estaque
(*Lent by Galeries Druet*)

9 Nature morte
(*Lent by M. Alphonse Kann*)

10 Portrait de l'artiste
(*Lent by M. Vollard*)

11 Portrait de Mme. Cézanne
(*Lent by M. Vollard*)

12 Les Pétunias
(*Lent by M. Charles Pacquement*)

13 Dame au chapelet
(*Lent by Galeries Druet*)

14 La Toilette
(*Lent by Galeries Druet*)

EDOUARD MANET (1832–1883)

15 La femme aux oeillets roses
(*Lent by Bernheim Jeune & Cie*)

Manet and the Post-Impressionists 17

OCTAGONAL GALLERY

PAUL CÉZANNE (1839–1906)

16 Les Maisons
(*Lent by M. Vollard*)

EDOUARD MANET (1832–1883)

17 Au Café
(*Lent by Bernheim Jeune & Cie*)

PAUL CÉZANNE (1839–1906)

18 La Route
(*Lent by M. Vollard*)

19 Baigneuses
(*Lent by Bernheim Jeune & Cie*)

20 Le grand pin
(*Lent by Galeries Druet*)

EDOUARD MANET (1832–1883)

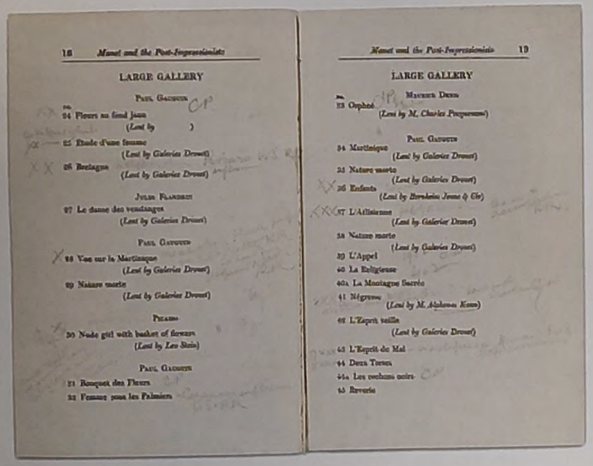
21 Baigneuses
(*Lent by Bernheim Jeune & Cie*)

22 La Promenade
(*Lent by Bernheim Jeune & Cie*)

LARGE GALLERY

PAUL GAUGUIN

23 Adam et Eve
(*Lent by Galeries Druet*)



16 *Manet and the Post-Impressionists*

LARGE GALLERY

PAUL GAUGUIN

24 Fleurs au fond jaune
(*Lent by*)

25 Etude d'une femme
(*Lent by Galeries Druet*)

26 Bretagne
(*Lent by Galeries Druet*)

JULES FLANDRIN

27 Le dame des vendanges
(*Lent by Galeries Druet*)

PAUL GAUGUIN

28 Vue sur la Martinique
(*Lent by Galeries Druet*)

29 Nature morte
(*Lent by Galeries Druet*)

PICASSO

30 Nude girl with basket of flowers
(*Lent by Leo Stein*)

PAUL GAUGUIN

31 Bouquet des Fleurs
32 Femme sous les Palmiers

Manet and the Post-Impressionists 19

LARGE GALLERY

MAURICE DENIS

33 Orphée
(*Lent by M. Charles Pacquement*)

PAUL GAUGUIN

34 Martinique
(*Lent by Galeries Druet*)

35 Nature morte
(*Lent by Galeries Druet*)

36 Enfants
(*Lent by Bernheim Jeune & Cie*)

37 L'Arlésienne
(*Lent by Galeries Druet*)

38 Nature morte
(*Lent by Galeries Druet*)

39 L'Appel

40 La Religieuse

40a La Montagne Sacrée

41 Négresse
(*Lent by M. Alphonse Kann*)

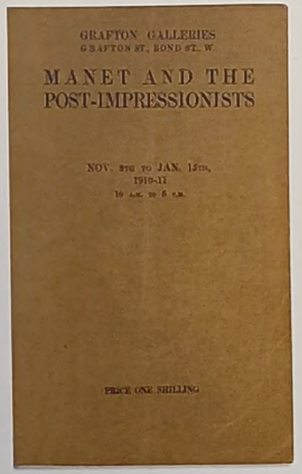
42 L'Esprit veille
(*Lent by Galeries Druet*)

43 L'Esprit du Mal

44 Deux Tetes

44a Les cochons noirs

45 Reverie



GRAFTON GALLERIES
GRAFTON ST., BOND ST., W.

MANET AND THE POST-IMPRESSIONISTS

NOV. 8TH TO JAN. 15TH, 1910-11
10 A.M. TO 6 P.M.

PRICE ONE SHILLING

↑ Cover of the catalog for "Manet and the Post-Impressionists," 1910. The catalog includes an unsigned introduction attributed to Desmond MacCarthy, who served as secretary of the exhibition committee, based on notes by Fry and provides a room-by-room account of the exhibition (p. 92).

↖ ↓ Spreads from the catalog for "Manet and the Post-Impressionists." The catalog also reveals the diverse lenders to the exhibition, from the private collection of Leo Stein to the avant-garde Parisian galleries of Ambroise Vollard, Bernheim-Jeune, and Galeries Druet.

A selection of paintings from "Manet and the Post-Impressionists":

← Paul Gauguin
Spirit of the Dead Watching [Manao tupapau], 1892
Oil on burlap mounted on canvas
26¼ × 44½ in (92.1 × 113.1 cm)

↙↙ Paul Cézanne
Bay of l'Estaque [La baie de l'Estaque] 1879–83
Oil on canvas
23¾ × 29¼ in (60.3 × 74.3 cm)

↙ Paul Gauguin
The Black Pigs [Les cochons noirs], 189
Oil on canvas
35¾ × 28½ in (91 × 72 cm)

↙↙ Maurice Denis
Ulysses with Calypso
[Ulysses chez Calypso], 1905
Oil on canvas
32½×46 in (82.5×116.5 cm)
Denis depicted this classic mythological scene with the sea nymph Calypso and hero Ulysses using the flattened perspective and stylized palette characteristic of Post-Impressionism. Showing particular interest in this artist prior to the exhibition, Roger Fry had translated texts by him and reviewed at least one exhibition in which Denis participated, the Salon d'Automne, 1910, making special mention of his mural, *Florentine Evening*.

↓ Paul Gauguin
Christ in the Garden of Olives
[Christ dans le jardin des oliviers], 1889
Oil on canvas
29 × 36 in (73.6 × 91.4 cm)

↑ Édouard Manet
A Bar at the Folies-Bergère
[Un bar aux Folies-Bergère], 1882
Oil on canvas
37¾ × 51⅛ in (96 × 130 cm)

↗ Vincent van Gogh
Woman Rocking a Cradle [La berceuse], 1889
Oil on canvas
36⅛ × 29 in (92.7 × 73.7 cm)

→ Vincent van Gogh
Pieta, after Delacroix, 1889
Oil on canvas
28¼ × 23¾ in (73 × 60.5 cm)

→→ Paul Cézanne
An Old Woman with a Rosary, c. 1895–1896
Oil on canvas
31¼ × 25¾ in (80.6 × 65.5 cm)

→ Vincent van Gogh
Wheat Field with Crows, 1890
Oil on canvas
20 × 39½ in (50.5 × 103 cm)

↓ "Giving Amusement to All London: Paintings by Post-Impressionists," supplement to the *Sketch*, 16 November 1910, reproducing works by Paul Gauguin, Vincent van Gogh, Maurice de Vlaminck, André Derain, Henri Matisse, Jules Flandrin, and Henri-Edmond Cross.

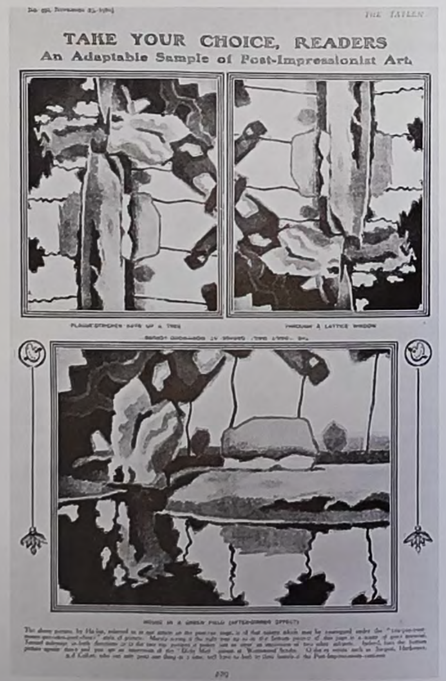
→ Poster by H. M. Bateman reproduced in the *Bystander*, 23 November 1910. Bateman captures the public's response to Post-Impressionist works at the Grafton Galleries, including van Gogh's *The Postman Roulin*, rendered in the center of the poster.

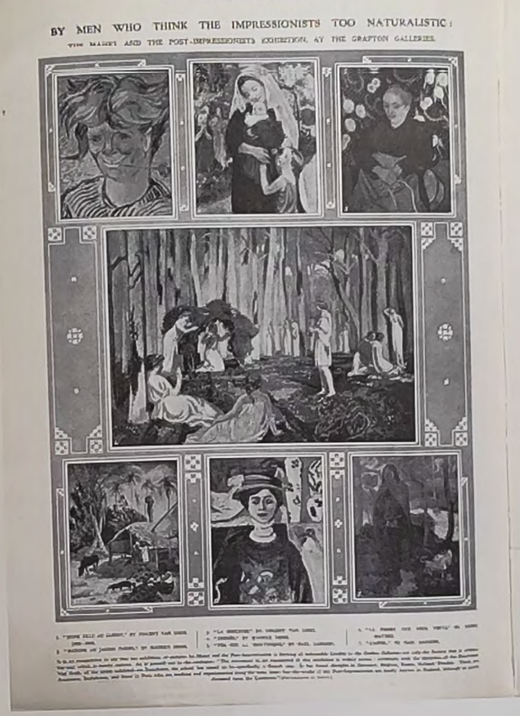
↘ "Take Your Choice, Readers An Adaptable Sample of Post-Impressionist Art," the *Tatler*, 23 November 1910. This weekly publication entertains its readers by reproducing Augustin Herbin's *House in a Green Field* oriented three ways. The exhibition received widespread coverage in London's daily newspapers and weekly illustrated journals.

GIVING AMUSEMENT TO ALL LONDON: PAINTINGS BY POST-IMPRESSIONISTS.

Post-Impressions of the Post-Impressionists

POSTED, NEAR THE GRAFTON GALLERIES, BY H. M. BATEMAN


TAKE YOUR CHOICE, READERS
An Adaptable Sample of Post-Impressionist Art.

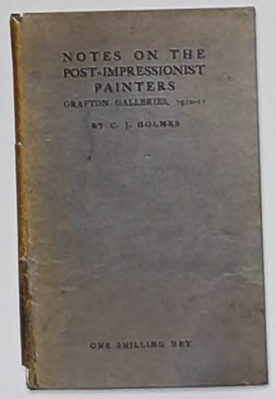

BY MEN WHO THINK THE IMPRESSIONISTS TOO NATURALISTIC:

ATTRACTORS OF ALL SOCIETY: WORKS BY POST-IMPRESSIONISTS.

↑ Spread from the *Illustrated London News*, 26 November 1910. Among works reproduced are van Gogh's *Portrait of Dr. Gachet* and *Woman Rocking a Cradle*, Gauguin's *The Black Pigs* (titled here *Vue sur la Martinique*), and Edouard Manet's *A Bar at the Folies-Bergère*.

→ Frank Reynolds illustrates the varied reactions of visitors to "Manet and the Post-Impressionists" in the *Illustrated London News*, 3 December 1910.

→→ Cover of *Notes on the Post-Impressionist Painters* by Charles John Holmes, London, 1910–11. This 40-page pamphlet, written by the director of London's National Portrait Gallery, discusses the works on exhibit in depth; it was presumably for sale at the Grafton Galleries.


NOTES ON THE POST-IMPRESSIONIST PAINTERS
GRAFTON GALLERIES, 1910-11
BY C. J. HOLMES
ONE SHILLING NET

Manet and the Post-Impressionists [exh. cat.]

"The Post-Impressionists"

ANONYMOUS

London, 1910

–

The pictures collected together in the present Exhibition are the work of a group of artists who cannot be defined by any single term. The term 'Synthesists,' which has been applied to them by learned criticism, does indeed express a quality underlying their diversity; and it is the principal business of this introduction to expand the meaning of that word, which sounds too like the hiss of an angry gander to be a happy appellation. As a definition it has the drawback that this quality, common to all, is not always the one most impressive in each artist. In no school does individual temperament count for more. In fact, it is the boast of those who believe in this school, that its methods enable the individuality of the artist to find completer self-expression in his work than is possible to those who have committed themselves to representing objects more literally. This, indeed, is the first source of their quarrel with the Impressionists: the Post-Impressionists consider the Impressionists too naturalistic.

Yet their own connection with Impressionism is extremely close; Cézanne, Gauguin and van Gogh all learnt in the impressionist school. There are pictures on the walls by these three artists, painted in their earlier years, which at first strike the eye as being more impressionist than anything else; but, nevertheless, the connection of these artists with the Impressionists is accidental rather than intrinsic.

By the year 1880 the Impressionists had practically won their battle; nor is it likely any group of artists will ever have to fight so hard a one again. They have conquered for future originality, if not the right of a respectful hearing, at least of a dubious attention. By 1880 they had convinced practically everybody whose opinion counted, that their methods and ideas were at any rate those of artists, not those of cranks and charlatans. About this date the reaction against Impressionism, which this Exhibition represents, began to be distinctly felt. The two groups had one characteristic in common: the resolve of each artist to express his own temperament, and never to permit contemporary ideals to dictate to him what was beautiful, significant, and worthy to be painted. But the main current of Impressionism lay along the line of recording hitherto unrecognised aspects of objects; they were interested in analysing the play of light and shadow into a multiplicity of distinct colours; they refined upon what was already illusive in nature. In the pictures of Seurat, Cross, and Signac here exhibited, this scientific interest in the representation of colour is still uppermost; what is new in these pictures is simply the method of representing the vibration of light by painting objects in dots and squares. The Post-Impressionists on the other hand were not concerned with recording impressions of colour or light. They were interested in the discoveries of the Impressionists only so far as these discoveries helped them to express emotions which the objects themselves evoked; their attitude towards nature was far more independent, not to say rebellious. It is true that from the earliest times artists have regarded nature as 'the mistress of the masters,' but it is only in the nineteenth century that the close imitation of nature, without any conscious modification by the artist, has been proclaimed as a dogma. The Impressionists were artists, and their imitations of appearances were modified, consciously and unconsciously, in the direction of unity and harmony; being artists they were forced to select and arrange. But the receptive, passive attitude towards the appearances of things often hindered them from rendering their real significance. Impressionism encouraged an artist to paint a tree as it appeared to him at the moment under particular circumstances. It insisted so much upon the importance of his rendering this exact impression that his work often completely failed to express a tree at all; as transferred to canvas it was just so much shimmer and colour. The "treeness" of the tree was not rendered at all; all the emotion and associations such as trees may be made to convey in poetry were omitted.

This is the fundamental cause of difference between the Impressionists and the group of painters whose pictures hang on these walls. They said in effect to the Impressionists: 'You have explored nature in every direction, and all honour to you; but your methods and principles have hindered artists from exploring and expressing that emotional significance which lies in things, and is the most important subject matter of art. There is much more of that significance in the work of earlier artists who had not a tenth part of your skill in representing appearance. We will aim at that; though by our simplification of nature we shock and disconcert our contemporaries, whose eyes are now accustomed to your revelations, as much as you originally disconcerted your contemporaries by your subtleties and complications.' And there is no denying that the work of the Post-Impressionists is sufficiently disconcerting. It may even appear ridiculous to those who do not recall the fact that a good rocking-horse often has more of the true horse about it than an instantaneous photograph of a Derby winner.

The artists who felt most the restraints which the Impressionist attitude towards nature imposed upon them, naturally looked to the mysterious and isolated figure of Cézanne as their deliverer. Cézanne himself had come in contact with Manet and his art is derived directly from him. Manet, it is true, is also regarded as the father of Impressionism. To him Impressionism owes much of its power, interest and importance. He was a revolutionary in the sense that he refused to accept the pictorial convention of his time. He went back to seventeenth-century Spain for his inspiration. Instead of accepting the convention of light and shade falling upon objects from the side, he chose what seemed an impossibly difficult method of painting, that of representing them with light falling full upon them. This led to a very great change in the method of modelling, and to a simplification of planes in his pictures which resulted in something closely akin to simple linear designs. He adopted, too, hitherto unknown oppositions of colour. In fact he endeavoured to get rid of chiaroscuro.

Regarded as a hopeless revolutionary, he was naturally drawn to other young artists, who found themselves in the same predicament; and through his connection with them and with Monet he gradually changed his severe, closely constructed style for one in which the shifting, elusive aspects of nature were accentuated. In this way he became one of the Impressionists and in his turn influenced them. Cézanne, however, seized upon precisely that side of Manet which Monet and other Impressionists ignored. Cézanne, when rendering the novel aspects of nature to which Impressionism was drawing attention, aimed first at a design which should produce the coherent, architectural effect of the masterpieces of primitive art. Because Cézanne thus showed how it was possible to pass from the complexity of the appearance of things to the geometrical simplicity which design demands, his art has appealed enormously to later designers. They recognise in him a guide capable of leading them out of the *cul de sac* into which naturalism had led them. Cézanne himself did not use consciously his new-found method of expression to convey ideas and emotions. He appealed first and foremost to the eye, and to the eye alone. But the path he indicated was followed by two younger artists, van Gogh and Gauguin, with surprising results. Van Gogh's morbid temperament forced him to express in paint his strongest emotions, and in the methods of Cézanne he found a means of conveying the wildest and strangest visions conceived by any artist of our time. Yet he, too, accepts in the main the general appearance of nature; only before every scene and every object he searches first for the quality which originally made it appeal so strangely to him: *that* he is determined to record at any sacrifice.

Gauguin is more of a theorist. He felt that while modern art had opened up undiscovered aspects of nature, it had to a great extent neglected the fundamental laws of abstract form, and above all had failed to realise the power which abstract form and colour can exercise over the imagination of the spectator. He deliberately chose, therefore, to become a decorative painter, believing that this was the most direct way of impressing upon the imagination the emotion he wished to perpetuate. In his Tahitian pictures, by extreme simplification he endeavoured to bring back into modern painting the significance of gesture and movement characteristic of primitive art.

The followers of these men are pushing their ideas further and further. In the work of Matisse, especially, this search for an abstract harmony of line, for rhythm, has been carried to lengths which often deprive the figure of all appearance of nature. The general effect of his pictures is that of a return to primitive, even perhaps of a return to barbaric, art. This is inevitably disconcerting; but before dismissing such pictures as violently absurd, it is fair to consider the nature of the problem which the artist who would use abstract design as his principle of expression has to face. His relation to a modern public is peculiar. In the earliest ages of art the artist's public were able to share in each successive triumph of skill, for every advance he made was also an advance towards a more obvious representation of things as they appeared to everybody. Primitive art, like the art of children, consists not so much in an attempt to represent what the eye perceives, as to put a line round a mental conception of the object. Like the work of the primitive artist, the pictures children draw are often extraordinarily expressive. But what delights them is to find they are acquiring more and more skill in producing a deceptive likeness of the object itself. Give them a year of drawing lessons and they will probably produce results which will give the greatest satisfaction to them and their relations; but to the critical eye the original expressiveness will have vanished completely from their work.

The development of primitive art (for here we are dealing with men and not children) is the gradual absorption of each newly observed detail into an already established system of design. Each new detail is hailed with delight by their public. But there comes a point when the accumulations of an increasing skill in mere representation begin to destroy the expressiveness of the design, and then, though a large section of the public continue to applaud, the artist grows uneasy. He begins to try to unload, to simplify the drawing and painting by which natural objects are evoked, in order to recover the lost expressiveness and life. He aims at *synthesis* in design; that is to say, he is prepared to subordinate consciously his power of representing the parts of his picture as plausibly as possible, to the expressiveness of his whole design. But in this retrogressive movement he has the public, who have become accustomed to extremely plausible imitations of nature, against him at every step; and what is more, his own self-consciousness hampers him as well.

The movement in art represented in this exhibition is widely spread. Although, with the exception of the Dutchman, van Gogh, all the artists exhibited are Frenchmen, the school has ceased to be specifically a French one. It has found disciples in Germany, Belgium, Russia, Holland, Sweden. There are Americans, Englishmen and Scotchmen in Paris who are working and experimenting along the same lines. But the works of the Post-Impressionists are hardly known in England, although so much discussed upon the Continent. The exhibition organised by Mr. Robert Dell at Brighton last year has been our only chance of seeing them. The promoters of this exhibition have therefore thought it would be interesting to provide an opportunity for a greater number to judge these artists. The ladies and gentlemen on the Honorary Committee, though they are not responsible for the choice of the pictures, by lending their names have been kind enough to give this project their general support.

"The Post-Impressionists at the Grafton: The Twilight of the Idols"

ROBERT ROSS

Morning Post — London, 7 November 1910

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A date more favourable than the Fifth of November for revealing the existence of a wide-spread plot to destroy the whole fabric of European painting could hardly have been chosen. On Saturday accordingly the Press was invited to the Grafton Gallery—an admirable substitute for the vaults of Westminster—where the new Guido Fawkes, his colleagues, and alleged predecessors are exhibiting their gunpowder. Mr. Roger Fry, I regret to say, has acted the part of Catesby, while a glance at the names of the honorary committee reveals that more than one member of the Upper House is implicated. It is the way of modern conspiracies; we all join them sooner or later. To-day, which is the private view, it will be decided whether the anticipated explosion is going to take place. Mr. Edmund Gosse in one of his delightful prose portraits has recalled how the poet Mallarmé first came to England in order to try and interest people in Manet's designs for Edgar Poe's *Raven*. 'They were received by us,' he confesses, 'with underlying laughter.' Now, Manet has been long accepted for one of the milestones, one of the parting points, in the history of Nineteenth Century painting, was so accepted long before his pictures were removed from the purgatorial Luxembourg to the Louvre. Here at the Grafton the presence of some of his pictures (none, it will be admitted, of first-rate importance) indicate that his name is invoked as the artistic parent—the not very respected parent, we gather—of the Post-Impressionists, or 'Synthesists,' as we must learn to call them. Whether Mr. Gosse and his friends were wrong about the designs for the *Raven* or not (and I am inclined to think they were justified) there is no doubt whatever that the vast majority of the pictures at the Grafton, notably those of MM. Matisse, Maurice Denis, and Maurice de Flamineck, will be greeted by the public with a more damning and more permanent ridicule. When the first shock of merriment has been experienced there must follow, too, a certain feel-

ing of sadness that distinguished critics whose profound knowledge and connoisseurship are beyond question should be found towelcome pretension amd imposture. It is only comparable to the no less deplorable credulity evinced by serious men of science in the chicanery of spiritualism, automatic writing, and the narratives of the neuropath. Public taste has been so often wrong. Its present idols become the paving stones or macadam of the morrow. The pariahs of one generation are prophets for its successor. With these lamentable precedents perhaps it is more regrettable than extraordinary that any charlatanism in art or literature may now enjoy the privilege of examination such as should be only accorded to serious new developments. And it is an error to suppose that because posterity momentarily reverses a hostile contemporary opinion the original opinion was wrong. Fortified with such minatory principles, anyone can derive from the exhibition of the Post-Impressionists at the Grafton instruction, pleasure, and amusement.

The preface to the catalogue sets forth in straightforward language the historical relation of the 'Synthesists' to Manet. 'The Post-Impressionists were not concerned with recording impressions of colour, light, or anything else exactly. They were interested in the discoveries of the Impressionists only so far as these discoveries helped them to express emotions which the objects themselves evoked; their attitude towards Nature was far more independent, not to say rebellious.' 'Anything else exactly' is particularly naïve. I can only reply to the frank admission of the apologist that the emotions of these painters (one of whom, van Gogh, was a lunatic) are of no interest except to the student of pathology and the specialist in abnormality. At Broadmoor there are a large number of Post-Impressionists detained during his Majesty's pleasure. Their works are, however, already the property of the State. The National Arts Collections Fund may sleep in peace.

In the Octagonal Gallery, side by side with the Manets, may be seen a number of works by Cézanne, who 'seized upon precisely that side of Manet and his followers which Manet and the Impressionists ignored.' To my uninitiated eyes they appear sketches for underpainting of pictures by someone who, if he cannot draw very well, sees though he does not seize the true aspects of Nature at rather commonplace moments. We are told 'that he aimed at design which should produce the coherent architectural effect of the masterpieces of primitive art.' All I can say is that he failed; whether from insufficient knowledge of the manipulation of paint or an entire misunderstanding of the aims or methods of the primitives I donot profess to judge. The French are too progressive, too curious for new experiments, ever to succeed in the archaistic rehandling of archaic formulas. M. Denis in one room illustrates the impossibility of a Frenchman assimilating the sentiment of the Primitives; Cézanne, in the other, the hopeless attempt to parody their objectivity. Cézanne is neither coherent nor architectural. Even the great Puvis, who is both, was never more than haunted by the Primitives. In the centre of this room is, however, one of the really beautiful things in the exhibition, a terra-cotta nude by Maillol, who has much in common with Mr. Epstein. At all events he produces an effect similar to that of naturalistic Egyptian sculpture, though the insistence on the feminism of the model is alien to the spirit of all ancient art not deliberately pornographic. Of the Manets, *Un bar aux Folies-Bergère*, for all its fine painting (note the flowers in the tumbler), is eloquent of the dangers, foreseen by Reynolds, of resting pedantically satisfied with your own period and ignoring what he called the universal. What a distressing possession, how unpleasing, how 'fashionable.' But Manet is a great painter and a great draughtsman.

In the Large Gallery may be found some justification of the exhibition, let me say of the enthusiasm, about the new school of paint, if new school there be. Gauguin is an artist with a fresh idea, a curious technique, and a fantastic vision. He, too, can draw and paint. His fantastic vision includes, conforms even to, obvious types of beauty, a rare quantity in modern art. *L'arlésienne* (No. 37) may not be a great picture, but of its charm and accomplishment there can be no two opinions. His colour is a little odd, barbaric rather than primitive; but when you learn that he emigrated to Tahiti, which forms the subjects and backgrounds of his pictures, you realise that he does not hypnotise his admirers by mere strangeness and unfamiliarity, on which the others chiefly rely. He has some of the pattern and invention of Beardsley. I am indebted to Mr. Walter Sickert for pointing out to me the influence of Cézanne in Gauguin's European pictures; in *Femme sous les Palmiers* (No. 32) and of Pissarro in *Bretagne* (No. 26). However delightful these earlier works, how fortunate that he did get away to Tahiti. *Paysage Bretonne* (No. 87), and *Le gardeur d'oies* (No. 88, wrongly catalogued van Gogh) are by one who, if not a master, counts in the hierarchy of artists. Whether he went to a South Sea island in order to become a real primitive, he certainly succeeded. In No. 28, *Vue sur la Martinique*, you get the identical point of view (or superficially the identical point of view) of the naturalistic fresco painters in the Egyptian tombs. The jolly little black pigs only rendered a silhouette, yet so real and living, and the brown-skinned girl crouching in the foreground are as much copied from despised Nature as the famous 'frieze of geese,' familiar to all students of Egyptology. On the north wall of the Large Gallery are a group of later Gauguins, in which you observe that his peculiar style, which may please or displease, undoubtedly has the 'decorative' qualities claimed for the school. Like all good decorations, it is based on something seen, like the famous Britons on the Roman drop curtain; not mere emotion. Here is Byzantinism vindicated. He would not have got that effect by gazing at the Russian eikons or early mosaics. The Gauguins should have been hung together instead of being used for salting the exhibition. Young artists need scarcely be told that until there is a Tahiti village at Shepherd's Bush it is premature to 'gauguinise' the European landscape or the Aryan race. Let them look for their own grotesques, like the carvers of the miserere seats. I do not profess to see any connection between van Gogh and Gauguin, except that their names, in a Shakespearean sense, both begin with G. Van Gogh is the typical matoid and degenerate of the modern sociologists. *Jeune Fille au Bleuet* (No. 67) and the *Cornfield with Blackbirds* (No. 71) are the visualised ravings of an adult maniac. If that is art it must be ostracised, as the poets were banished from Plato's republic. A later blossom of an unsavory stock has not only dispersed with chiaroscuro (one of the achievements of Cézanne, I learn) but has dispensed with painting. The only primitives he resembles are the woolwork trophies of our great-grandmothers, though there is less form, less art. To the negative silliness of covering canvas with pigment *La Femme aux yeux verts* (No. 111) he has added the primitive and more pristine offence of "modelling." If van Gogh belongs to the School of Bedlam, M. Matisse follows the Broadmoor tradition in a predilection for mere discords of pigment; needless to say, quite a different thing from discordant colouring. To dispense with light and shade, with technique altogether, may be childish, as the catalogue altogether, may be childish, as the catalogue would have us think. To discuss the 'pavement art' of MM. Denis, Signac, Henri-Edmond Cross, and Georges Seurat and others would be a waste of time, for anyone sufficiently idle and mindless could reproduce them. One is sorry to find M. Vallotton (No. 102 and others) in such company: M. Jean Puy (No. 125), M. Marquet (114), or the mild French Blake and water, Odilon Redon, who has joined every movement for the last twenty years. These are strayed sheep from the gracious uplands and valleys of art. Whitman has been called an artist in his very rejection of art. And there have constantly appeared in the world of painting geniuses such as El Greco and Monticelli who ignore the grammar, the architecture, and the limitations of their medium, as Whitman has done in the case of language. Both, it must be noted, were proficient craftsmen, and conformed in their early work to the discipline of study. Gauguin, too, is a genius of this kind. He submitted himself, however, to Nature, exotic Nature, it may have been—distorted it certainly was when filtered through Cézanne, who candidly admitted his own failure, an almost unnecessary avowal. Once in his life every artist must propitiate the implacable goddess or he can never be initiated to the Eleusinian *simplicities* of Art. The relation of M. Henri Matisse and his colleagues to painting is more than that of the Parisian Black Mass or the necromantic orgies of the Decadents to the religion of Catholics. Did Ingres when he quarrelled with Delacroix foresee the development of Romanticism into Post-Impressionism? It is not possible. If so, he is indeed the great man he is claimed to be by artists and critics. I can now understand why the German Emperor dismissed a high official from a Berlin Gallery. And if the movement is spreading (another boast of the catalogue) it should be treated like the rat plague in Suffolk. The source of infection (e.g., the pictures) ought to be destroyed.

"Post-Impressionists"

SIR WILLIAM BLAKE RICHMOND

Morning Post — London, 16 November 1910

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Sir,—The article published in the *Morning Post* on Monday last, signed 'Robert Ross,' excited my curiosity to visit the Grafton Galleries. At the same time I wondered if Mr. Ross had exaggerated his vituperation, and if his reasons for non-conversion to the dogma set forth in the catalogue were justifiable. The idea was attractive. Here, so near to us in sensible old London, we were to find the natural offspring of noble Byzantine artists, in a fashionable quarter. Rumours were afloat that Mr. R. Fry had discovered the real thing in Paris, and had commenced his mission in London. Prominent 'experts,' enlightened connoisseurs, directors of picture galleries served as credentials, the official being immaculate to the crowd. So it all promised well; a nobly-spent hour or two could not be wasted surely under such auspices, and a final victory for 'Synthetics' was in store.

A bitter disappointment! Mr. Ross exercised too much charity; he has been too kind to quite tell the truth that is in him. It has led him to see merits, or their possibility, where none exists, except relatively to the hopeless impotence of the majority of these productions, which maintains, increasing *ad nauseam* from room to room, till it culminates in daubs by living French experimentalists.

Poor Manet! It is scarcely fair to attribute the parentage of this rotten egotism to him. A disagreeable artist, a brutal painter, yet a man of genius as he must have been to have executed *The Lady with the Parrot*. In the gallery there is nothing to vindicate his name, the work shown is poor and common. But Cézanne might well be the father of the Post-Impressionists. Mr. Ross thinks he might have become an artist. I differ. Cézanne mistook his vocation; he should have been a butcher, not a brave but a harmless profession. The Octagonal Gallery contains the kind of thing to be expected later on. There are far worse productions to be seen presently.

The gospel which inspired the dogma of the preface is in evidence on the walls of the large gallery and onwards. This preface is a lamentable medley of sophistry, crudities, and, not to mince matters, absence of good sense. Read carefully, traces of insecurity emerge, melancholy suggestions, quite unintentional no doubt, that the writer was not convinced by his matter or of himself in relation to it. The paradox of *The Rocking Horse* is an instance, and his painfully needed apology for the Committee, which gives away the whole show.

Well, what can be said? One cannot reason where there is no reason to start with. The marvel is that these hysterical daubs should have been perpetrated at all, but various forms of disordered mentality are common to these times. That they should not have been exhibited is obvious. It was unkind to expose them. It is futile to attack the authors of these morbid excrescences, I mean those especially which inspired Mr. Fry's dogma, and are the substance of this mission of folly to England. These incompetents neither could nor can draw, paint, or design. Blind to the beauty of line, colour, or motive, they do not possess the first faculty of a painter, power to observe. Yet we are told these are the inheritors of the genius which created the Mosaics in Venice, the tomb of Galla Placidia, the Ravenna Moccus, the dalmatic of Constantine, and countless other glories. The simile is strangely unfortunate. The work of Byzantine masters at its worst bears a kind of reminiscence of greater things, while at its best it recalls the reserve and strength of the purest Greek work, from which it can claim descent. No, the relationship is not as Mr. Fry would wish; it is to be found in the criminal lunatic asylum at Broadmoor, and the sad Bethel on the Island of Buvano, with a difference, the one a furious, terrible, passionate scourge, these melting their vigour before the embers of their expired Ego. Childish, not childlike!

To be fair, two pictures relieve the mournful monotony of degenerate cynicism, *Orchard in Provence* and *Saint Tropez en Fête*; both are harmless and pretty essays in impression.

One will try to forget this joyless and melancholy exhibition. I hope that in the last years of a long life it will be the last time I shall feel ashamed of being a painter. It was a relief to breathe the petroleum-laden air of Bond street, even the chill of a November afternoon came invigorating as a kind of message of health after the suffocating tomb containing scarcely even the ashes of intelligence. For a moment there came a fierce feeling of terror lest the youth of England, young promising fellows, might be contaminated here. On reflection I was reassured that the youth of England, being healthy, mind and body, is far too

virile to be moved save in resentment against the providers of this unmanly show. They will not growl at the perpetration of these atrocities, but pity them; but they are, and justly, indignant at the unwisdom of the sorry show.

It would be nauseating to myself and to your readers to dwell on details; it would be almost as unpleasant to read as to see. There is no fear of permanent mischief, I hope; the things are too bad for that. There is no regeneration for deluded egoists, 'sons of noble France, alas!' They are lost morally in the inferno where Dante places the unfaithfull to God and to his enemies. The greater the artist, the more intense the vision, the loftier the imagination, the more modestly he will subjugate himself to Nature. Seeing more in her than others see, more beauty, more character, more diversity, and more divinity than is given to ordinary folk, whatever he creates in colour or form he admits to have been primarily Nature's property. Nature is not only the stern mentor, but the confiding friend of the true artist, the friend that keeps him straight and sane. Should he in a moment of weakness seek to escape her chiding he will speedily cease to be an artist and become an egoist, perhaps finally to cut his throat or die impotent and purposeless. Self-restraint once lost, vanity once permitted to take charge, Art is doomed to temporary destruction.

I hope the Press will teem with resentment against the insult offered to the noble arts of Design, Sculpture, and Painting, an insult also to the taste of the English people implied by the suggestion or presupposition that they have become so degenerate as to accept even from 'experts' such an imbecile mission. This invasion of depressing rubbish is, thank Heaven, new to our island of sensible and, in their own fashion, poetic people, and we hope the reckless prophet and promoters of this rotten league will be hardly pressed by indignant cries of 'Shame,' correct their directions of their wandering, and evince regret for the hysteria by which they may have been temporarily mastered. Egoistic exultation is one of the sure signs of approaching insanity. The dogma set forth by Mr. Fry is egoism of the most insidious kind. The terrible warnings, perhaps necessary, however regrettable, now hang upon the walls of the Grafton Galleries.

"The Grafton Gallery—I"

ROGER FRY

Nation—London, 19 November 1910

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Having been asked to advise on the choice of the pictures and their arrangement in the present exhibition, my remarks on it must be taken rather as explanatory—in the nature of an apologia—than as the expression of entirely independent criticism. The reader, thus duly warned, may discount my judgment to whatever degree he thinks fit. I have been accused of a strange inconsistency in admiring, at one and the same time, the accredited masterpieces of ancient art and the works here collected together, which are supposed to typify the latest and most violent of all the many violent reactions against tradition which modern art has seen. Without being much interested in the question of my own consistency, I believe that it is not difficult to show that the group of painters whose work is on view at the Grafton Gallery are in reality the most traditional of any recent group of artists. That they are in revolt against the photographic vision of the nineteenth century, and even against the tempered realism of the last four hundred years, I freely admit. They represent, indeed, the latest, and, I believe, the most successful, attempt to go behind the too elaborate pictorial apparatus which the Renaissance established in painting. In short, they are true pre-Raphaelites. But whereas previous attempts—notably our own pre-Raphaelite movement—were made with a certain conscious archaism, these artists have, as it were, stumbled upon the principles of primitive design out of a perception of the sheer necessities of the actual situation. At once the question is likely to arise: Why should the artist wantonly throw away all the science with which the Renaissance and the succeeding centuries have endowed mankind? Why should he wilfully return to primitive or, as it is derisively called, barbaric art? The answer is that it is neither wilful nor wanton but simply necessary, if art is to be rescued from the hopeless encumbrance of its own accumulations of science; if art is to regain its power to express emotional ideas, and not to become an appeal to curiosity and wonder at the artist's perilous skill. The fundamental error that is usually made is that progress in art is the same thing as the much more easily measured and estimated progress in power of representing nature. All our histories of art are tainted with this error, and for the simple reason that progress in representation can be described and taught, whereas progress in art cannot so easily be handled. And so we think of Giotto as a preparation for a Titianesque climax, forgetting that with every piece of representational mechanism which the artist acquired, he both gained new possibilities of expression and lost other possibilities. When you can draw like Tintoretto, you can no longer draw like Giotto, or even like Piero della Francesca. You have lost the power of expression which the bare recital of elementary facts of mass, gesture, and movement gave, and you have gained whatever a more intricate linear system and chiaroscuro may provide in expressive power. But the more complex does not really subsume the simpler: it replaces it by a new unity, in which the old elements of unity are lost sight of. Even if they are there, they are no longer put forward so as to make their full appeal; they are muffled and shrouded in the new elaboration.

Now, modern art had arrived in Impressionism at a point where it could describe everything visible with unparalleled ease and precision, but where, having given to every part of the picture its precise visual value, it was powerless to say anything of human import about the things described. It could not materially alter the visual values of things, because the unity cohered in that and in that alone. To give to the rendering of nature its response to human passion and human need demanded a re-valuation of appearances, not according to pure vision, but according to the pre-established demands of the human senses. It is this re-valuation of the visual that Cézanne started (or, rather, it already began in Manet). He discovered distortions and ruthless simplifications (which are, of course, distortions, too) of natural form, which allowed the fundamental elements of design—the echo of human need—to reappear in his representations. And this has gone on ever since his day in the group of artists we are considering. More and more regardlessly they are cutting away the merely representative element in art to establish more and more firmly the fundamental laws of expressive form at its barest, most abstract elements. Like the Anarchists, with whom they are compared, they are not destructive and negative, but intensely constructive. This does not mean that they will not destroy much that we cling to still. Growth, and not decay, is the real destroyer, and the autumn leaf falls, not because the wind and frost attack it, but because next year's bud has undermined its base. And so if all the accumulated science of representation, all the aids to perspective, all the anatomical diagrams, all the lore about atmospheric values goes, it will, no doubt, be built up again one day, but with passionate zest and enthusiasm, as it was once before; only we to whom it has been transmitted as a corpus of dead fact, alien to the imagination, must press on to the discovery of that difficult science, the science of expressive design. No artist can profitably use a single fact beyond what his imagination can grasp; every fact that he uses must have been passionately apprehended. We have become so accustomed to accepting masses of dead, undigested facts, facts of observation, and not re-creation, that we must begin at the beginning, and learn once more the A.B.C. of abstract form. And it is just this that these French artists have set about, with that clear, logical intensity of purpose, that absence of all compromise, of all regard for side issues, which has so nobly distinguished the French genius.

And there is at least this consolation, if we must surrender that too complex language of complete naturalistic representation, which, to tell the truth, very few artists in all these centuries since the Renaissance have been able quite evidently to master—namely, that the biggest things demand the simplest language, and Cimabue could tell us more of divine, and Giotto more of human, love than Raphael or Rubens.

From another point of view, moreover, the effect of discarding the actual illusion of three-dimensional space—of losing chiaroscuro and atmospheric color—is not without compensations. I believe that anyone who will look, without preconception, merely at the general effect of the walls of the Grafton Gallery must admit that in no previous exhibition of modern art has the purely decorative quality of painting been more apparent. If only the spectator will look without preconception as to what a picture ought to be and do, will allow his senses to speak to him instead of his common-sense, he will admit that there is a discretion and a harmony of color, a force and completeness of pattern, about these pictures, which creates a general sense of well-being. In fact, these pictures, like the works of the early primitives, and like the masterpieces of Oriental art, do not make holes in the wall, through which another vision is made evident. They form a part of the surface which they decorate, and suggest visions to the imagination, rather than impose them upon the senses.

I should also like to appeal against another misconception of the aim and purposes of art, which often hinders spectators from a true perception of beauty, namely, the idea that the artist takes refuge in certain formulae, merely to avoid trouble, and that he thereby cheats us of his part of the contract.

This is surely importing moral considerations into a field where they do not apply. What, indeed, could be more desirable than that all the world should have the power to express themselves harmoniously and beautifully—in short, that everyone should be an artist. The beauty of the resulting work has nothing to do with the amount of effort it has cost. While no effort is vain that is needed to produce beauty, it is the beauty, and not the effort, that avails. If by some miracle beauty could be generated without effort, the whole world would be the richer. As a matter of fact, many of the artists whose work is shown at the Grafton have already proved themselves accomplished masters in what is supposed to be the more difficult task of representation. That they have abandoned the advantage which that professional skill affords is surely rather a sign of the sincerity of their effort in another direction. No doubt the acrobatic feats of virtuosity always will appeal to our sense of wonder; but they are better reserved for another stage. If only an artist has genuine conviction, he rarely lacks sufficient skill to give it expression. And as things are at present, with our gaping admiration for professional skill, we are in less danger of finding a prophet whose utterance is spoiled by imperfect articulation than of being drowned beneath floods of uninspired rhetoric.

"The Exhibition at the Grafton Galleries: Gauguin and van Gogh" [excerpt]

DESMOND MACCARTHY

Spectator—London, 26 November 1910

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. . . To read many of the letters which have appeared in the Press, one might suppose that, with the exception of Manet's pictures, the whole Exhibition contained nothing but artistic impostures. It is strange that so few critics should have recognized, for instance, the decorative beauties of the Gauguins which hang upon the right wall of the large gallery,—their somber and rich colour, their gravity and expressiveness of line, the large execution of their design, the restfulfulness of the general effect. There is a classical quality, too, in some of them, notably in the group of figures lent by M. Alphonse Kann, which has escaped the notice of many; perhaps because the Exhibition contains some headlong experiments they never thought to find such a quality; perhaps they did not see it because this classical quality is combined with barbaric sentiment. But there it is, nevertheless, plain to the eye for any one who is not, for one reason or another, too angry to look at the pictures. The epithet 'barbarous' often resounds through the Grafton Galleries, and there is a sense in which the term is applicable to Gauguin's best work. It has the barbaric quality which, as Baudelaire pointed out, is often visible at a completed stage of art, whether Egyptian or Assyrian. This quality springs from 'the impulse to see things largely, to consider them in their total effect, to synthesize and abbreviate all detail.' Gauguin's work is the work of a man whose eye and memory have absorbed the colour and silhouette of the human figure, who refuses to be distracted by the clamouring crowd of detailed impressions which compete to be recorded,—the work of one to whom nudity is a simple and familiar fact. There is an imaginative side to these pictures, too, which must appeal to any one who has recovered from the surprise of such a simplification of appearances. . . .

. . . A lady stops in front of *La Berceuse* and exclaims with comic exaggeration of horror at the idea of hanging such a picture in her room. She is quite right. It would never do as a background to her life. It was not meant to beautify some rosy, cosy interior, but a sailor's cabaret in Marseilles or Saint-Marie. That yellow, stolid, unchangeable woman does not represent a mother to her, whose ideal of maternity is much more graceful and intimately tender; but look at it with some imagination of the experience of those for whom it was meant, and it is full of significance; look at the colour and design of the picture, keeping in mind its proper surroundings, and the colour and design are grand and appropriate. It would be a great disaster if artists only painted pictures suitable for the homes of those who can buy their pictures at high prices; not because such pictures cannot be of the finest beauty, but because such a restriction bars out so much beauty of another kind that might find expression in art. . . .

"Pop Goes the Past" [excerpt]
HOLBROOK JACKSON
T.P.'s Weekly — London, 16 December 1910

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Quite recently I was crossing the Place du Carrousel with a well-known British artist; it was his first visit to Paris, and I felt that he was somewhat in my charge. My sense of responsibility ventured a little further than mere guidance from one point to another, and every now and then I felt called upon to indicate some historic building or other mark of the past. But my enthusiasm for such things—never very great, let me say—was not encouraged. As we crossed the Place du Carrousel, however, it was inevitable, and perhaps natural, that I should indicate the Louvre beyond the pleasant greenswards and the ugly statues on our left. My artist friend was unmoved. I thought he did not quite realise what the word Louvre actually meant, so I annotated my information. 'It is the place,' I said, 'where they keep the great art collections of the past—the temple of the Venus de Milo and the *Olympia* de Manet.' 'To hell with the Louvre!' he said, earnestly, but cheerfully. 'Let's get on to the Salon d'Automne, and see the Art of the Future.'

I reproduce his words in all their limpid brutality, because they represent a modern point of view which cannot be otherwise expressed. The attitude of mind has, of course, existed in past ages; it has, indeed, existed in every age that stands out with any sort of distinction, but never before has this attitude been deliberate and self-conscious. The expression of my friend is but one hint of a spreading and deep-rooted revolt against the past. The most lively spirits of to-day are up in arms against what is traditional, what is established, what is classical. The tiny upheavals in modern politics, which fill the newspapers of the hour with consternation and dismay, are but the far-away echo of a movement beginning deep down in the soul of European ideas. The leaders of the revolt know little and care less about politics. They are not organised, they laugh at organisation. They do not even know each other. Their movement is not a movement, it is an impulsion towards an altogether new interpretation of life. It believes in nothing that was, in little that is, and it is even suspicious of that which is to be. It has no leaders, but here and there you may come across dark and forbidding names, like Bakounin and Max Stirner, which may be taken as keynotes of the new intellectual cacophony. Beside the fierce gospels of such men, Bernard Shaw sounds like Samuel Smiles and Friedrich Nietzsche like Isaac Watts. But Bakounin and Max Stirner are dead, and their books almost unknown; still, in no other books do you get the fervid hatred of the past which is more than beginning to dominate European art. In Warsaw and Munich, in Paris and Brussels, and Milan there are workers in all the arts who defy the tradition in every sweep of the brush, in every stroke of the chisel, in every variation of tone and word. England is as yet untouched by these new ideas; intellectually we are still at the tail-end of the realist movement which produced the great Impressionists: Rodin in sculpture, Ibsen in drama, Whitman in poetry, Manet and Degas in painting, Zola in the novel, Richard Strauss in music, and Nietzsche in philosophy. In Germany, in France, in Italy the discussions about these creators of new values are over. It is recognised that the Impressionists have done their work—it is established safely in the opera houses of the people, the popular libraries, the public museums, and the Louvre. . . . The Objectors hold the forums of Europe to-day, and their texts are not Nietzsche and Ibsen, Strauss and Cézanne, but Post-Impressionism and Futurism.

We in England are beginning to hear something of both these subjects. The exhibition of Post-Impressionist paintings at the Grafton Galleries has attracted a considerable amount of attention; people are still going to the show to have a good laugh, just as they used to go to the Impressionist Exhibitions in Paris. How they did laugh at Manet!—and Manet is now at the Louvre! Still, some who go to the Grafton to laugh remain to pray, and at least one English art critic has publicly announced that he is on the eve of conversion. Post-Impressionism is not, however, mere repudiation of the past; it is something more than that, something greater. Post-Impressionism is the affirmation of the present; it is the hot portrayal of feeling following perception; not the thing seen, mind you—that would be Impressionism. The Impressionists painted what they saw, and they are of the past. 'We've got far ahead of them,' they say on Mont Parnasse. The Post-Impressionist paints what he feels about the thing seen; he cares not whether you like what he feels, or whether he communicates his feeling to others. His work is the result of a half-frenzied desire for individual expression; it considers nothing but itself and its need. All the old conceptions of art are ignored; his work is quite traditionless. And he has as little reverence for beauty as he has for the antique. 'Beauty is all very well in its way,' he will tell you, 'but what has it got to do with art?' These Modernists are trying to do for Europe what Walt Whitman tried to chant his own fellow-countryman into doing for America. 'The cleanest expression,' said the poet, 'is that which finds no sphere worthy of itself, and makes one.' That is what the new movement is doing. In the immediate past the artist has looked with suspicion upon science, and in so doing he has forgotten his vocation; for it is one of the functions of art to anticipate life, and he could not do that in a scientific age by ignoring the moving spirit of that age. Supremely great artists like Michael Angelo and Leonardo da Vinci did not ignore science; they used it. And it is in the use of science that the most modern painters are distinguishable from the back numbers. The Post-Impressionist movement is as scientific as it is artistic; many of the most astounding results of its leaders are due to the scientific recognition of the laws of vibration in regard to light and colour and form.

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Die Erste Ausstellung der Redaktion *Der Blaue Reiter* *The First Blaue Reiter Exhibition*

Munich, 1911

LOCATION AND DATES
Moderne Galerie–Heinrich Thannhauser, Theatinerstrasse 7, Munich, c. 18 December 1911–3 January 1912

ORGANIZER
Redaktion *Der Blaue Reiter* (The Editors of *The Blaue Reiter*): Wassily Kandinsky, Franz Marc

ITINERARY
Gereonsklub, Cologne, c. 20 January–31 January 1912; Galerie Der Sturm, Berlin, 12 March–10 April 1912; Vereinigte Werkstätten für Kunst im Handwerk, Bremen, Germany, 27 April–c. 31 May 1912; Museum Folkwang, Hagen, Germany, July 1912; Kunstsalon Marcel Goldschmidt und Cie, Frankfurt, 28 August–c. 15 September 1912; Kunstsäle Louis Bock & Sohn, Hamburg, 14 September–c. 31 October 1912; Művészház, Budapest, May 1913; Blomqvists kunstalong, Oslo, January 1914; Salon Strindberg, Helsinki, 14 February–9 March 1914; Trondhjems Kunstforening, Trondhjems (Trondheim), Norway, April 1914; Olséns konsthandel, Gothenburg, Sweden, June/July 1914

ARTISTS
Albert Bloch, David Burliuk, Vladimir Burliuk, Heinrich Campendonk, Robert Delaunay, Elisabeth Epstein, Eugen von Kahler, Wassily Kandinsky, August Macke, Franz Marc, Gabriele Münter, Jean Bloé Niestlé, Henri Rousseau, Arnold Schönberg

EXHIBITION CATALOG
Der Blaue Reiter: Die erste Ausstellung der Redaktion.
(The Blaue Reiter: The first exhibition of the editors).

er (Blue Rider) Exhibition originated with a publication. the ideas instantiated in the exhibition had first urse of planning an artists' almanac—a report on a osophy proposed as the foundation for new artistic Kandinsky and Franz Marc put together this account lopments and their connections with earlier works— w puppets, medieval woodcuts, and children's drawings reco and Vincent van Gogh—they stressed the affinities artistic expressions. The subsequent exhibition was shared spiritual ground of different kinds of modern nage to the primitive realism of Henri Rousseau, , 1896–98, was enshrined above a laurel wreath, and tractions by Kandinsky and Robert Delaunay. Reiter show emerged, as well, from Kandinsky's long and promoting exhibitions. (The artists' group that 1901, the Phalanx, mounted twelve exhibitions before In addition, the show was embedded in art-world vas also a founder of the New Artists' Association of nd exhibition, in September 1910, was one of the first of ean surveys of modern art. But the organization split as d their associates became more radical, and Kandinsky's *mposition V*, 1911, was rejected from the Association's n days of frantic activity, Kandinsky and his colleagues Reiter show as an alternative exhibition that was hung onservative New Artists' Association show in Heinrich erne Galerie. The Blaue Reiter exhibition traveled to uropean cities, including Cologne and Berlin, where, in ugurated avant-garde impresario Herwarth Walden's *Der Blaue Reiter* was published soon after, and it stands as ealism of the time, and of this exhibition—a spirit that in the trenches of World War I.

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"Pop Goes the Past" [excerpt]
HOLBROOK JACKSON
T.P.'s Weekly — London, 16 December 1910

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Quite recently I was crossing the Place du Carrousel with a well-known British artist; it was his first visit to Paris, and I felt that he was somewhat in my charge. My sense of responsibility ventured a little further than mere guidance from one point to another, and every now and then I felt called upon to indicate some historic building or other mark of the past. But my enthusiasm for such things—never very great, let me say—was not encouraged. As we crossed the Place du Carrousel, however, it was inevitable, and perhaps natural, that I should indicate the Louvre beyond the pleasant greenswards, and the ugly statues on our left. My artist friend was unmoved. I thought he did not quite realise what the word Louvre actually meant, so I annotated my information. 'It is the place,' I said, 'where they keep the great art collections of the past—the temple of the Venus de Milo and the *Olympia* de Manet.' 'To hell with the Louvre!' he said, earnestly, but cheerfully. 'Let's get on to the Salon d'Automne, and see the Art of the Future.'

I reproduce his words in all their limpid brutality, because they represent a modern point of view which cannot be otherwise expressed. The attitude of mind has, of course, existed in past ages; it has, indeed, existed in every age that stands out with any sort of distinction, but never before has this attitude been deliberate and self-conscious. The expression of my friend is but one hint of a spreading and deep-rooted revolt against the past. The most lively spirits of to-day are up in arms against what is traditional, what is established, what is classical. The tiny upheavals in modern politics, which fill the newspapers of the hour with consternation and dismay, are but the far-away echo of a movement beginning deep down in the soul of European ideas. The leaders of the revolt know little and care less about politics. They are not organised, they laugh at organisation. They do not even know each other. Their movement is not a movement, it is an impulsion towards an altogether new interpretation of life. It believes in nothing that was, in little that is, and it is even suspicious of that which is to be. It has no leaders, but here and there you may come across dark and forbidding names like Bakounin and Max Stirner, which may be taken as keynotes of the new intellectu
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Unsigned statement. Munich: F. Bruckmann, 1911. Catalogs for the traveling exhibitions include: *Der Blaue Reiter: Die erste Ausstellung der Redaktion, 1911-1912*, second edition, Cologne; Bremen, Hagen, Frankfurt, Hamburg; *Der Sturm: Der Blaue Reiter, Franz Flaum, Oskar Kokoschka, Expressionisten*, Berlin; *Katalogus A Művészháboz Nemzetközi Postimpresszionista Kiállitásához*, Budapest; *Der Sturm: Der Blaue Reiter, Gemälde-Ausstellung*, Oslo, Helsinki, Trondheim, Gothenburg

RELATED PUBLICATION

Der Blaue Reiter. Essays, quotations, poems, and other texts by Roger Allard, David Burliuk, Erwin von Busse, Eugène Delacroix, Goethe, Thomas von Hartmann, Wassily Kandinsky, Nikolai Kul'bin, Mikhail Kuzmin, August Macke, Franz Marc, Vasily Rozanov, Leonid Sabaneiev, and Arnold Schönberg. Munich: Piper Verlag, 1912.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Number of artists: 14
Number of works: 43
Total attendance: unknown

The First Blaue Reiter (Blue Rider) Exhibition originated with a publication. Or, more accurately, the ideas instantiated in the exhibition had first crystallized in the course of planning an artists' almanac—a report on a radical aesthetic philosophy proposed as the foundation for new artistic practice. As Wassily Kandinsky and Franz Marc put together this account of recent artistic developments and their connections with earlier works—from Egyptian shadow puppets, medieval woodcuts, and children's drawings to paintings by El Greco and Vincent van Gogh—they stressed the affinities among highly diverse artistic expressions. The subsequent exhibition was meant to display the shared spiritual ground of different kinds of modern painting, with an homage to the primitive realism of Henri Rousseau, whose *Chicken Farm*, 1896–98, was enshrined above a laurel wreath, and ground-breaking abstractions by Kandinsky and Robert Delaunay.

The first Blaue Reiter show emerged, as well, from Kandinsky's long history of organizing and promoting exhibitions. (The artists' group that he had established in 1901, the Phalanx, mounted twelve exhibitions before dissolving in 1904.) In addition, the show was embedded in art-world politics. Kandinsky was also a founder of the New Artists' Association of Munich, whose second exhibition, in September 1910, was one of the first of the great pan-European surveys of modern art. But the organization split as Kandinsky, Marc, and their associates became more radical, and Kandinsky's large abstraction *Composition V*, 1911, was rejected from the Association's next show. In sixteen days of frantic activity, Kandinsky and his colleagues organized the Blaue Reiter show as an alternative exhibition that was hung alongside the more conservative New Artists' Association show in Heinrich Thannhauser's Moderne Galerie. The Blaue Reiter exhibition traveled to a number of other European cities, including Cologne and Berlin, where, in modified form, it inaugurated avant-garde impresario Herwarth Walden's Galerie Der Sturm. *Der Blaue Reiter* was published soon after, and it stands as a memorial to the idealism of the time, and of this exhibition—a spirit that would be obliterated in the trenches of World War I.

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← Cover of *Der Blaue Reiter*, Munich, 1912. Cover illustration by Wassily Kandinsky. Edited by Kandinsky and Franz Marc, the almanac was conceived in 1911 as a vehicle for expressing the aesthetic philosophy of a group of diverse artists unified by their idealism, their grounding in the spiritual, and their dedication to modern painting. Its title derives from a Kandinsky painting of 1903. Although it was published in May 1912, after The First Blaue Reiter Exhibition, the almanac inspired the show. Accompanying 14 essays are 144 illustrations ranging from works by artists included in the exhibition (Henri Rousseau, Marc, and Kandinsky, among others) to pieces by Henri Matisse and Pablo Picasso to Bavarian mirror paintings, Russian folk art, Italian mosaics, and Japanese prints. Essays by members of the Blaue Reiter group—artists, writers, and musicians—appear along with quotations from historical figures like Eugène Delacroix and Goethe.

↓ The exhibition took place in three rooms of the Moderne Galerie owned by Heinrich Thannhauser, a dealer and collector of Impressionist and modern art. In room one (left to right): Gabriele Münter, *Dark Still Life* (partial view); Kandinsky, *Composition V* (in the adjacent room); Albert Bloch, *Three Pierrots*; Heinrich Campendonk, *Leaping Horse*; Rousseau, *Chicken Farm* (hanging above a laurel wreath); Marc, *Portrait of Henri Rousseau*; Robert Delaunay, *The Town No. 2 (2nd Version)* (partial view). This and all other installation views were photographed by Münter, a participating artist and member of the Blaue Reiter group, who was also Kandinsky's companion.

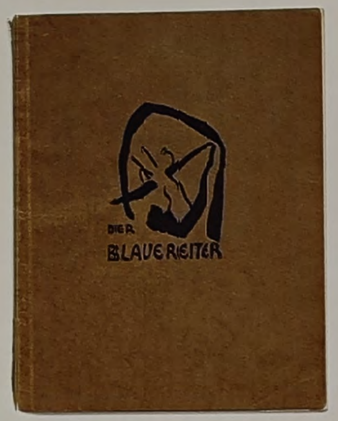
← Room one (left to right): Delaunay, *The Town No. 2 (2nd Version)*; Arnold Schönberg, *Nocturnal Landscape* (above); Münter, *Frost Landscape* (below); Münter, *Evening* (right wall, top); August Macke, *Still Life—Vase of Flowers with Agave*; Bloch, *Houses and Chimneys*.

↓ Room one (left to right): Jean Bloé Niestlé, *Willow Warblers* (above left); Bloch, *Head* (below left); Kandinsky, *Impression—Moscow*.

← Room two (left to right): Franz Marc, *The Yellow Cow* (partial view); Arnold Schönberg, *Self-Portrait (from the Rear)*; Wassily Kandinsky, *St. George II*; Vladimir Burliuk, *Portrait Study* (above); Gabriele Münter, *Country Road (in Winter)* (below); Franz Marc, *Deer in the Forest I*; Kandinsky, *Composition V* (partial view).

↓ Room two (left to right): Münter, *Still Life (Pink)* (partial view); August Macke, *Indians on Horseback* (above); Robert Delaunay, *St. Séverin No. 1* (below); David Burliuk, *Horses* (above the door); Marc, *Landscape with Animals and Rainbow* (above); Kandinsky, *With Sun* (below); Kandinsky, *Improvisation 22* (partial view).

↑ Room three (left to right): Marc, *Landscape (Stony Path)* (partial view); Delaunay, *The Tower*; Elisabeth Epstein, *Portrait* (above); Heinrich Campendonk, *Woman and Animal* (below).

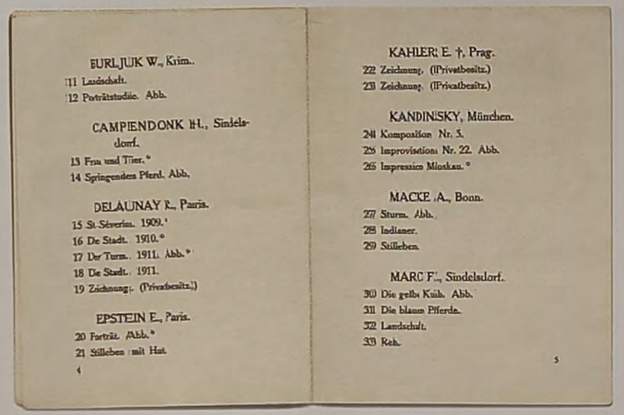


DIE ERSTE AUSSTELLUNG
DER REDAKTION

DER BLAUE REITER

Wir suchen in dieser kleinen Ausstellung nicht eine präzise und spezielle Form zu propagieren, sondern wir bezwecken in der Verschiedenheit der vertretenen Formen zu zeigen, wie der innere Wunsch der Künstler sich mannigfaltig gestaltet.

1911—12


EURLJUK W., Krim.
11 Landschaft.
12 Porträtstudie. Abb.

CAMPENDONK H., Sindelsdorf.
13 Frau und Tier. *
14 Springendes Pferd. Abb.

DELAUNAY R., Paris.
15 St. Séverin. 1909.¹
16 De Stadt. 1910. *
17 De Turm. 1911. Abb. *
18 De Stadt. 1911.
19 Zeichnung. (Privatbesitz.)

EPSTEIN E., Paris.
20 Porträt. Abb. *
21 Stilleben mit Hut.

4

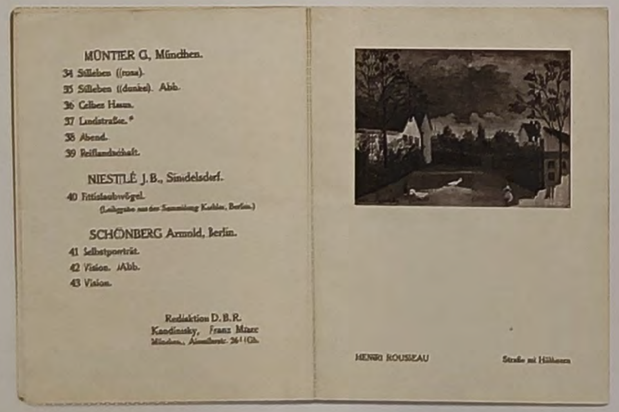
KAHLER E. †, Prag.
222 Zeichnung. (Privatbesitz.)
223 Zeichnung. (Privatbesitz.)

KANDINSKY, München.
24 Komposition Nr. 5.
25 Improvisation Nr. 22. Abb.
26 Impression Moskau. *

MACKE A., Bonn.
27 Sturm. Abb.
28 Indianer.
29 Stilleben.

MARC F., Sindelsdorf.
30 Die gelbe Kuh. Abb.
31 Die blauen Pferde.
32 Landschaft.
33 Reh.

5


MÜNTER G., München.
34 Stilleben (rosa).
35 Stilleben ((dunkel). Abb.
36 Gelbes Haus.
37 Landstraße. *
38 Abend.
39 Reiflandschaft.

NIESTLÉ J. B., Sindelsdorf.
40 Fittichlosvögel.
(Lehrgabe aus der Sammlung Kahler, Berlin.)

SCHÖNBERG Arnold, Berlin.
41 Selbstporträt.
42 Vision. Abb.
43 Vision.

Redaktion D. B. R.
Kandinsky, Franz Marc
München, Ainmillerstr. 36 I Gh.

HENRI ROUSSEAU Straße mit Häusern

←← Cover of the catalog for "The First Exhibition of the Editors of *Der Blaue Reiter*," 1911. Cover illustration by Wassily Kandinsky.

← A programmatic statement was printed on the title page of the catalog. It reads: "In this small exhibition, we do not seek to propagate any one precise and special form; rather, we aim to show, through the diversity of represented forms, how variously the artist's inner desire can be rendered."

↙ The catalog lists 43 works by 14 artists, including Robert Delaunay, nos. 15–19; Kandinsky, nos. 24–26; August Macke, nos. 27–29; and Franz Marc, nos. 30–33.

↙↙ Catalog spread listing works by Gabriele Münter and the composer-artist Arnold Schönberg. Henri Rousseau's *Chicken Farm*, one of two works by the artist included in the exhibition, is reproduced on the last page of the catalog.

Correspondence

MARIA MARC TO AUGUST MACKE

Sindelsdorf, Germany, 3 December 1911

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My dear August,

Today I have to tell you in more detail about the grave and weighty occurrences that finally forced Kandinsky, Münter, and Franz to leave the Association. As you can imagine, Franz has a great deal of writing to do—above all on account of the big Tschudi volume that is to be published by Piper & Co. But you must have been one of the first to have experienced what lack of unanimity prevailed at the Association, and I'll therefore try to describe for you what has happened over the last three days. I'll try to convey to you as briefly as possible the "course of the plot" of this tragicomedy, which I did not of course experience myself but, rather, heard about each day at noon and in the evening.

On Thursday there was to be a preview of the pictures for the December exhibition. And on Friday the deliberations of the jury.

On Thursday there emerged an at first seemingly innocuous dispute as to the point of having a jury. On one side were Jawlensky, Werefkin, and Marc (Kandinsky wasn't there). On the other were Erbslöh, Kanoldt, Wittenstein, etc., who could not understand that a jury cannot be expected to correct pictures, or even to prescribe how an artist should proceed through either rejecting or accepting a certain work, but that it should, at the most, turn against a member whose work has ceased to follow an earnest and honest path (one who is producing kitsch), especially in the case of an exhibition that has a shortage of space. At noon, Erbslöh announced that the Baroness was resigning from the Association with immediate effect, citing as her reason that it was impossible for her to belong to an Association, and to feel artistically free and at ease there, if the clear and self-explanatory tendencies in her own work were not understood—and where, on the contrary, such narrow views prevailed, the views of members who simply did not grasp what art was about. In saying this, Erbslöh seemed to be trying to re-establish calm and thus get back to the agenda. But Franz and Kandinsky objected, going immediately to the Baroness to explain to her that, if she herself did not stay (meaning that Jawlensky would also have to leave), then they, too, would resign. In order to prevent this (it would have meant the dissolution of the Association), she took the decision to stay, on condition that all works put up for exhibition be included in an entirely unjuried display. But, having done so, she then came out against this condition—and for Franz and Kandinsky this was an entirely incomprehensible move. Put to the vote, the motion in favor of an unjuried exhibition was, accordingly, defeated. And so the jury embarked upon its task. (By now it was Saturday morning—Friday was filled with hour-long debates—I'll tell you the details when I see you.) So, by now it was Saturday: in the morning Kandinsky received a letter from her with the request that he "should not be surprised at anything—but should accept *silently everything* that happened and have complete trust in her." —You can imagine the suspense, it was pure theater. But now we come to the really crazy and exciting part.—The inordinately turbulent meetings of Friday morning and afternoon were already over, and we now moved on to those of Saturday morning and afternoon.

But, to begin with, just remember the question that Franz had asked the Baroness that Sunday when we were all at Jawlensky's house—what was the meaning of the clause in the statutes concerned with a maximum size of four square meters for pictures in the unjuried part of the exhibition? The Baroness explained that it had initially been proposed—by *Kandinsky*—so as to guard against the inclusion of too many large pictures by the former member Palmié. But no one had ever taken notice of it. Franz should not worry, therefore—each exhibiting artist would be allowed to show *two unjuried* works.

So now, it was Saturday morning, and the jury assembled: they considered submissions in alphabetical order of artists' names, Bechtejeff, Erbslöh, etc. Every picture was accepted—and then they got to *Kandinsky*: he wanted to exhibit as unjuried his wonderful, new, large picture, *The Last Judgment* [Das jüngste Gericht]! And so the question arose: how big is it?? Over four square meters!!! This was in violation of the statute proposed by Kandinsky himself and had, accordingly, to be assessed *by the jury*—someone had to fetch the picture—it was assessed . . . and was *not* accepted. There was a long silence—then Franz stood up and explained that he was leaving because he regarded a majority capable of such an error in judgment as *incompetent*, etc., etc., etc., whereupon he was brusquely pulled back into his seat by the Baroness, who said: "Not so fast, Marc. Only Kandinsky has the right to question 'Why' the picture was rejected." Kandinsky was called in and declared himself ready to pose such a question. There was an awkward silence. Then Erbslöh, white as a sheet, stammered that perhaps each member of the jury, in alphabetical order, could indicate his own position. (So now—just try to imagine it—everyone who had rejected the picture had to raise his hand.) Bechtejeff went first. He stood there, inexperienced, anxious, and cornered, and finally droned: "I don't understand it," to which the Baroness responded: "*That is not a reason for rejecting a picture.*" And then she made a really wonderful speech, which concluded with her giving Kandinsky an emphatic handshake and congratulating him on such a marvelous work. Franz was quite enraptured (so much talking had already left him with quite a wry expression) and the others were all terribly agitated. There was a further question-and-answer session—Erbslöh made a convoluted speech in support of the applied arts—Kanoldt was really fuming, and was then accused by Marc of being incompetent and of having no justification for expressing his own opinion. Drs. Wittenstein, Schnabel, etc., were not asked what they thought because Kandinsky had said that he was interested only in painters' assessments and remained indifferent to those of scholars. Just think about it for a moment.—There were also diverse interludes. Dr. Schnabel leapt up almost right in front of the Baroness, and shouted and bellowed at her until Kandinsky's threat of a slap in the face forced him back—or perhaps it was Franz's already outstretched arms. Erbslöh sought and found a saving compromise in proposing that a post-hang jury should meet in eight days' time; he himself undertook to go up "every day and examine the picture in order to be absolutely sure about it." Dr. Schnabel pronounced a "no" to this proposal on the grounds that nothing was said in the statutes concerning the possibility of establishing such a post-hang jury. And Franz said that there would be no point: nothing would be achieved, even after eight days, on account of the existing gulf between the two sides in the dispute. He proposed that an extraordinary general assembly be held, in order to address the alternatives that now faced them—in short, *bend* or *break*. This meeting took place on Saturday afternoon.

The items put up for exhibition by Kandinsky, Franz, Jawlensky and Werefkin were, of course, all

turned down by the jury. Franz again sought a more conciliatory attitude and calmly asked Erbslöh how they had gone about putting together the last exhibition—perhaps, for instance, at the start, he might have rejected such a picture and yet later come to admire it. Erbslöh answered: "During the course of the year I have in fact changed my mind." (I should add that last year the picture concerned was only five centimeters smaller.)

Franz now made the following proposal: "This time we have *every picture unjuried*," though with a note in the catalog to indicate that an attempt was here being made to organize an exhibition without a jury, etc.—but he was outvoted.

So then Franz made another proposal—that everything should remain as it was except for the observation concerning the maximum size of four square meters, which had never been observed, and which should now be deleted. Erbslöh agreed that no one had ever taken any notice of this four-square-meter rule—though, when it came to the vote, he nonetheless failed to support Franz's proposal, which was now also rejected.

Thereupon, Kandinsky, Münter, and Franz announced their resignations and immediately left the meeting. So in the end their opponents got their way. But, when the three had left, the Baroness said: "Well, gentlemen, we have now lost our two most worthy members, as well as a marvelous picture—and we ourselves will soon look pretty dozy." Jawlensky and the Baroness had personal reasons, which we fully understand and respect, for not resigning along with the others. They have declared themselves to be in full solidarity with our views; and the Baroness, who came, as usual, to see Kandinsky in the evening, left us in no doubt that she saw no future for the Association.

These were terribly exciting days—just think *how* German was spoken there. Kandinsky has in the past been so cruel to me; yet in moments such as this, one is made so aware of the value of a person that one is prepared to forget every instance of vexation, every difference of opinions. He had created the Association; he had persuaded the others—putting his trust in Jawlensky—to join it, and now these young fellows, these scholars and fly-by-nights, behave in such a *mean* fashion. And in the presence of a picture that may well be the most remarkable ever painted, and which *cannot help but* thrill and stir everyone with an artistic sensibility. It is the most beautiful picture Kandinsky has ever created. But, of course, you know all this!

Now the editorial board of *Der Blaue Reiter* is preparing an exhibition; you'll soon hear more about it—get ready for this. The others, those young artists that didn't make the move along with the more mature ones, they'll be in for a "nasty" surprise. There has surely never been such a case where the young wanted to hold back those who were older.

As for this Tschudi book: the publisher Piper is supposed to be bringing out a large volume: all those concerned will be asked to contribute illustrated essays—you *too*—that somehow evoke the spirit of Tschudi.

I can't write anything more—my hand has practically seized up. I hope you can now more or less visualize these latest developments—you would, anyway, be able to guess at everything. After all, you know these idiots. So, what do you think about it? Do write soon!

My many and warm greetings to Lisbeth and your little son, and the most humble regards to your mother-in-law and your grandmother from the two of us.—Goodbye, ladies—goodbye, gentlemen—goodbye, Association—goodbye, dear August—your,

Maria and Franz

I'll just add this postscript: In the evening at Kandinsky's the Baroness was telling us that when she was with Kanoldt at the Café Odeon he said that he found Franz's paintings *Yellow Cow* [Gelbe Kuh] and *Deer in the Forest* [Das Reh im Wald] to be really rotten. So the Baroness was utterly *taken aback* when she later saw these pictures for herself; and, even before the turbulent days I've just described, she had argued about them with Kanoldt and his friends.

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Original German text from Wolfgang Macke, ed., Auguste Macke, Franz Marc: Briefwechsel *(Cologne: DuMont-Schauberg, 1964), 83–86.*

Correspondence [excerpt]
MARIA MARC TO LISBETH MACKE
Sindelsdorf, Germany, 22 December 1911

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... We are enormously grateful for the influence and the tireless interest of your uncle [the Berlin factory owner and art collector Bernhard Koehler]. He has committed himself most admirably to ensuring the success of the exhibition of Der Blaue Reiter—and so superbly that I can do nothing but add my own voice to the praise and the joy that all of us owe him. At times such as this one simply can't believe that there are two sides to him and that the other side is so capable of hurting people. We'll tell you more about this later, when we see you. He stayed here for the hanging and opening of the exhibition—and he bought pictures by Kandinsky, Münter, Campendonck, and Delaunay. The Delaunay picture was the *Eiffel Tower* [Eiffelturm] that is reproduced in *Der Blaue Reiter*. Two further Delaunay pictures, also both very beautiful, were sold to Erbslöh and Jawlensky—who mounted a rather less important exhibition of their own work in the neighboring rooms and who really don't care a fig about Franz and Kandinsky. The Baroness and Jawlensky are nonetheless always chasing after Kandinsky in a most dreadful manner. There's a great deal that's false about them.

And how are things with you? We only got to hear in a roundabout way about August's talk, and we would love to have been there. And we have no idea as to what he said about the row in the Association. Was he interested, overjoyed, or annoyed?...

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Original German text from Wolfgang Macke, ed., Auguste Macke, Franz Marc: Briefwechsel *(Cologne: DuMont-Schauberg, 1964), 89–91.*

Preface [unpublished]
WASSILY KANDINSKY AND FRANZ MARC
Der Blaue Reiter — Munich, 1911

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A great era has begun: the spiritual "awakening," the increasing tendency to regain "lost balance," the inevitable necessity of spiritual plantings, the unfolding of the first blossom.

We are standing at the threshold of one of the greatest epochs that mankind has ever experienced, the epoch of great spirituality.

In the nineteenth century just ended, when there appeared to be the most thoroughgoing flourishing—the "great victory"—of the material, the first "new" elements of a spiritual atmosphere were formed almost unnoticed. They will give and have given the necessary nourishment for the flourishing of the spiritual.

Art, literature, even "exact" science are in various stages of change in this "new" era; they will all be overcome by it.

Our [first and] most important aim is to reflect phenomena in the field of art that are directly connected with this change and the essential facts that shed light on these phenomena in other fields of spiritual life.

Therefore, the reader will find works in our volumes that in this respect show an *inner* relationship although they may appear unrelated on the surface. We are considering or making note of work that has a certain established, orthodox external form (which usually is all there is), but of work that has an *inner* life connected with the great change. It is only natural that we want not death but life. The echo of a living voice is only a hollow form, which has not arisen out of a distinct *inner necessity*; in the same way, there have always been created and will increasingly be created, works of art that are nothing but hollow reverberations of works rooted in this inner necessity. They are hollow, loitering lies that pollute the spiritual air and lead wavering spirits astray. Their deception leads the spirit not to life but to death. [With all available means we want to try to unmask the hollowness of this deception. This is our second goal.]

It is only natural that in questions of art the artist is called upon to speak first. Therefore the contributors to our volumes will be primarily artists. Now they have the opportunity to say openly what previously they had to hide. We are therefore asking those artists who feel inwardly related to our goals to turn to us as *brethren*. We take the liberty of using this great word because we are convinced that in our case the establishment automatically ceases to exist.

The artist essentially works for people who are called laymen or the public and who as such have hardly any opportunity to speak. It is natural that their feelings about art and their ideas should be expressed as well. So we are ready to provide space for any serious remarks from this quarter. Even short and unsolicited contributions will be published in the "opinions" column.

[In the present situation of the arts we cannot leave the link between the artist and the public in the hands of others. Reviews are mostly sickening. Because of the growth of the daily press, many unqualified art critics have stolen in among the serious ones; with their empty words they are building a wall in front of the public instead of a bridge. We will devote one special column to this unfortunate, harmful power so that not only the artist but also the public can be enabled to see the distorted face of contemporary art criticism in a clear light.]

Works like ours do not happen at fixed intervals, nor can living creations be ordered by man. Our volumes will therefore not appear at fixed times but rather spontaneously, whenever there is enough important material.

It should be almost superfluous to emphasize specifically that in our case the principle of internationalism is the only one possible. However, in these times we must say that an individual nation is only one of the creators of all art; one alone can never be a whole. As with a personality, the national element is automatically reflected in each great work. But in the last resort this national coloration is merely incidental. The whole work, called art, knows no borders or nations, only humanity.

Typescript preface by the "Editors," from August Macke's estate, October, 1911. Passages in brackets were deleted in a later version. (K. L.)

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From Wassily Kandinsky and Franz Marc, eds., The Blaue Reiter Almanac, *ed. Klaus Lankheit (New York: Viking Press, 1974), 250–51. Translation by Henning Falkenstein.*

"Über die Formfrage" [excerpt]
WASSILY KANDINSKY
Der Blaue Reiter— Munich, 1912

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At a certain time what is inevitable ripens, i.e., the creative *spirit* (which could be called the abstract spirit) makes contact with the soul, later with other souls, and awakens a yearning, an inner urge.

When the conditions necessary for the maturation of a certain form are met, the yearning, the inner urge, the force is strengthened so that it can create a new value in the human spirit that consciously or unconsciously begins to live in man.

Consciously or unconsciously man tries, from this moment on, to find a material form for that spiritual form, for the new value that lives within him.

This is the search by the spiritual value for materialization. Matter is a kind of larder from which the spirit chooses what is *necessary* for itself, much as a cook would.

This is the positive, the creative. This is the goodness. *The white, fertilizing ray.*

↑ Franz Marc (left) and Wassily Kandinsky with Kandinsky's woodcut that was used for the cover illustration of *Der Blaue Reiter*, 1911. Kandinsky executed 11 drawings and sketches for the cover of the almanac; this was the final version.

This white ray leads to evolution, to elevation. Behind matter, within matter, the creative spirit is hidden.

The veiling of the spirit in matter is often so thick that, generally, only a few people can see through it to the spirit. There are many people who cannot even recognize the spirit in a spiritual form. Today many do not see the spirit in religion, in art. There are whole epochs that deny the spirit, because the eyes of man cannot see the spirit at those times. So it was during the nineteenth century and so it is for the most part today.

Men are blindled.

A black hand covers their eyes. The black hand belongs to the hater. The hater tries with every available means to slow down the evolution, the elevation.

This is negative, this is destructive. This is evil. *The black, fatal hand.*

Evolution, movement forward and upward, is possible only when the way is clear, free of obstacles. This is the *outer condition*.

The force that propels the human spirit on the clear way forward and upward is the abstract spirit. It must be audible and it must be heard. The call must be possible. *This is the inner condition.*

To destroy these two conditions is the method the black hand uses against evolution.

Its tools are: fear of the clear way, of freedom (Philistinism), and deafness to the spirit (dull materialism).

That is why men regard each new value as inimical. They try to fight against it with scorn and defamation. The bearer of values is regarded as ridiculous and dishonest. They laugh at the scorn of new value.

This is the horror of life.

The joy of life is the incessant, constant victory of the new value.

This victory proceeds slowly. Gradually the new value conquers man. And when many men no longer question this value, indispensable and necessary today, then it will form a wall erected against tomorrow.

The metamorphosis of the new value (the fruit of freedom) into a fossilized form (a wall against freedom) is the work of the black hand.

All evolution, which is internal development and external culture, is thus a shifting of obstacles.

Obstacles destroy freedom. By this destruction they prevent us from hearing the new revelation of the spirit.

Obstacles are constantly created from new values that have pushed aside old obstacles.

We see that basically the most important thing is not the new value, but rather the spirit that has revealed itself in the new value. And the freedom necessary for revelations.

We see that the absolute cannot be sought in the form of (materialism).

Form is always temporal, i.e., relative, for it is nothing more than the means necessary today through which the present revelation makes itself heard.

Sound, therefore, is the soul of the form which only comes alive through sound and which works from the inside out.

Form is the outer expression of the inner content. . . .

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"On the Question of Form" in Wassily Kandinsky and Franz Marc, eds., The Blaue Reiter Almanac, *ed. Klaus Lankheit (New York: Viking Press, 1974), 147–49. Translation by Henning Falkenstein.*

Der Blaue Reiter: Die Erste Ausstellung der Redaktion [exh. cat., 2nd edition]

Preface

[WASSILY KANDINSKY AND FRANZ MARC]

Most likely the preface to the catalog for the traveling exhibition — Various cities, 1911–12

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The isolated position of the true artist among the people is nowadays a natural historical necessity. Nothing happens by chance and without an organic reason. How foolish it is to mourn the loss of the artistic sensibility of the nineteenth century! And should not this frequently invoked occurrence lead us to the realization that we now stand at the point where one long epoch cedes to another, a situation much like that of 1,500 years ago, when there was likewise a transitional era devoid of art and religion, where all that was great and old was dying and where something new and undreamt-of was emerging to take its place? Nature will not have wantonly destroyed the religion and art of a people without having some great scheme in mind. We live with the conviction that we are already able to announce the first signs of a new age.

It is infinitely difficult to identify the first works to be produced in a new era. Who can see clearly what they are aiming at and what will happen next? But the mere fact that these works exist, that they are now emerging in numerous, mutually independent contexts, and that they are imbued with an inner truth, allows us to be certain that they are the first signs of a new age, torches carried by those who are seeking out a new path.

Such moments are rare—are we too bold in wishing to draw attention to the few true signs of the times?

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Original German text from Klaus Lankheit, ed., Franz Marc Schriften *(Cologne, Germany: DuMont, 1978), 153–54.*

"Der Blaue Reiter"

ANONYMOUS

Hamburger Nachrichten — Hamburg, 10 January 1912

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"Der Blaue Reiter." Taking this as their name, a number of painters in Munich, having broken with the well-known New Artists' Association, have formed a group and have just exhibited for the first time at the Moderne Galerie. The intellectual leader of this group, himself based in Munich, is Kandinsky. The book he has just brought out with the Munich publisher R. Piper & Co., *Concerning the Spiritual in Art*, is an attempt to formulate the group's motivating ideas and aims. These artists (of Russian, French, and German origin) do not exclusively favor the use of a specific style; their aim, rather, is to show, through the diversity of represented forms, how variously the artist's inner desire can be rendered.

Announcement

ANONYMOUS

Allgemeine Rundschau — Munich, 20 January 1912

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At Thannhauser, in addition to exquisite landscapes by Marie Caspar-Filser, there were exhibitions by the Munich New Artists' Association and by a group with the stylish name "Der Blaue Reiter," displays that I mention here only because they sadly confirm every one of the harsh judgments uttered in Kreitmaier's essay on "Sick German Art" in the first 1912 issue of the *Allgemeine Rundschau*.

08

Les Peintres Futuristes Italiens

Paris, 1912

LOCATION AND DATES

Galerie Bernheim-Jeune, 15, rue Richepance, Paris, 5–24 February 1912

CURATOR

Filippo Tommaso Marinetti

ITINERARY

The Sackville Gallery, London, March 1912; Galerie Der Sturm, Berlin, 12 April–31 May 1912; Galerie Georges Giroux, Brussels, c. June 1912; Kunsthandel J. J. Biesing, The Hague, August 1912; Amsterdam, September 1912; Moderne Galerie–Heinrich Thannhauser, Munich, c. 31 October–November 1912. Possible other venues included Hamburg, Vienna, and Budapest, 1912–14.

ARTISTS

Umberto Boccioni, Carlo Carrà, Luigi Russolo, Gino Severini

EXHIBITION CATALOGS

Les peintres futuristes italiens. Preface and manifesto coauthored by Giacomo Balla, Umberto Boccioni, Carlo Carrà, Luigi Russolo, and Gino Severini. Paris: Galerie Bernheim-Jeune, 1912. Catalogs for the traveling exhibitions include: *Exhibition of Works by the Italian Futurist Painters*, London; *Zweite Ausstellung: Futuristen*, Berlin; *Les peintres futuristes italiens*, Brussels; *Die Futuristen*, distributed at various other European venues.

RELATED PUBLICATIONS

Der Sturm, selected issues featuring manifestos and other writings by Futurists, March 1912–May 1913.

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The veiling of the spirit in matter is often so thick that, generally, only a few people can see through it to the spirit. There are many people who cannot even recognize the spirit in a spiritual form. Today many do not see the spirit in religion, in art. There are whole epochs that deny the spirit, because the eyes of man cannot see the spirit at those times. So it was during the nineteenth century and so it is for the most part today.

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Franz Marc, eds., The
Lankheit (New York:
Translation by Henmin

Der Blaue Reiter:
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[WASSILY KANDIN

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

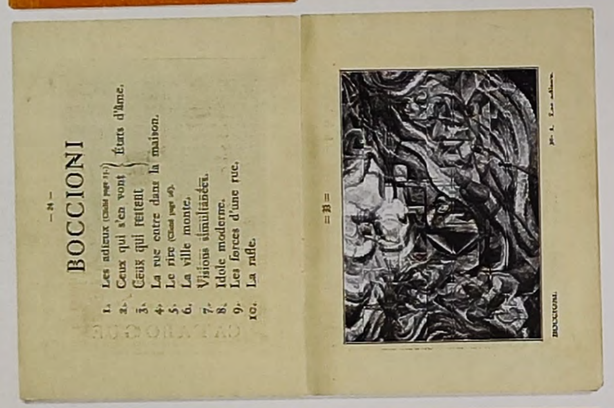
Number of artists: 4

Number of works: c. 35

Total attendance: Paris, unknown; London, c. 40,000; subsequent venues, unknown

Inspired by poet Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, who published the founding Futurist manifesto on the front page of *Le Figaro* in February 1909, the Italian Futurist painters published a "Technical Manifesto of Futurist Painting" in April 1910. Here they declared against stasis and tradition, committed themselves to depicting the dynamism of modern experience, and, oddly, called for a ten-year moratorium on painting the nude. Marinetti soon arranged for the painters to show their work together in December 1911 at Paris's prestigious Galerie Bernheim-Jeune, run by writer and critic Félix Fénéon. The only problem, as their colleague Gino Severini noted when he visited Milan in the summer of 1911, was that the artists' work had not yet caught up to their ambitions; their paintings were retrograde by current French standards, which Severini knew well, having been painting in the French capital himself since 1906.

Canceling the December exhibition, the wealthy Marinetti funded an October trip to Paris for the Italian artists Luigi Russolo, Carlo Carrà, and Umberto Boccioni to view the competition. There they saw the Cubist works at the Salon d'Automne, visited the studios of Pablo Picasso and Georges Braque, and socialized with Guillaume Apollinaire. On returning to Italy they rushed to create new paintings, and modify old ones, in time for a rescheduled exhibition in February 1912. With bravado, in the exhibition catalog the Italians accused the French Cubists of academicism and extolled their own work as authentically contemporary. Apollinaire lectured on their paintings twice during the exhibition, which received much attention in the local and international press. Following its success in Paris, the show traveled to London and around Europe, with many of the paintings purchased when they were exhibited at the Galerie Der Sturm in Berlin.



— 26 —
CARRÀ
11. Les funérailles de l'anarchiste Gallio
12. Cabaret de théâtre
13. Le mouvement du clair de lune.
14. Ce que m'a dit le tramway.
15. Portrait du poète Marinetti.
16. Fille à la fenêtre.
17. En magasin.
18. Sortie du théâtre.
19. La femme et l'absinthe.
20. La rue des balcons.
21. La gare de Milan.
— 27 —

← Cover of the catalog for "Les Peintres Futuristes Italiens," 1912. The catalog contained a checklist of 35 works, as well as a preface entitled "The Exhibitors to the Public" (translation, p. 120), written specifically for the catalog, and "Manifesto of the Futurist Painters," a French translation of the "Technical Manifesto of Futurist Painting" first published in Italian in 1910. Both texts are signed by Umberto Boccioni, Carlo Carrà, Luigi Russolo, Giacomo Balla, and Gino Severini. (Although the catalog lists one piece by Balla, his work was not ultimately included in the show.)

↙ The catalog included entries for ten works by Boccioni, including *The Laugh*, no. 5.

↙↙ Entries for works by Carrà, which included *Funeral of the Anarchist Galli*, no. 11. Angelo Galli was an Italian anarchist killed by police in Milan in 1904, and his funeral, which Carrà attended, occasioned a violent confrontation between police and mourners.

↓ Filippo Tommaso Marinetti at the Galerie Bernheim-Jeune on the opening day of the exhibition, 5 February 1912. Marinetti, poet and leader of the Futurist movement, advocated a rejection of artistic tradition and antiquated ideals, instead glorifying "the beauty of speed" and technology, war, and violence. A British critic who interviewed Marinetti for the *Pall Mall Gazette* in 1912 wrote that he "turns the hard facts of modern industrial and mechanical progress into poetry of passionate violence."

→ Marinetti and the group of Futurist painters who exhibited at Galerie Bernheim-Jeune, Paris, February 1912. Left to right: Russolo, Carrà, Marinetti, Boccioni, and Severini.

↓ The exhibition at Galerie Bernheim-Jeune included two paintings by Russolo (left) and Severini's *The Pan-Pan Dance at the Monico* (right), out of approximately 35 works by 4 artists. The gallery was known for exhibiting avant-garde and Impressionist artists, among them Édouard Vuillard and Pierre Bonnard.

↑ Umberto Boccioni (left) and Filippo Tommaso Marinetti in front of works by Boccioni, including *The Laugh* (far left), at Galerie Bernheim-Jeune, Paris, 1912. In conjunction with "Les Peintres Futuristes Italiens," Marinetti organized a conference on 10 February at the Maison des Etudiants in Paris, where he proclaimed the Futurists' politics and agenda. In his Futurist manifesto of 1909, Marinetti likened museums to "cemeteries" that encourage a "useless admiration of the past."

↑ Max Aghion, "On the Usefulness of Italian Futurist Painters," *Gil Blas* (Paris), 13 February 1912. This cartoon in an illustrated magazine depicts the installation of the exhibition, including a rough sketch of Luigi Russolo's *Revolt* (above left, behind column). The caption reads: "For scaring the Turks in Tripolitania, maybe," referring to the Turkish-Italian war, which had begun in the Ottoman province of Tripolitania (present-day Libya) in the fall of 1911.

→ Cover of the catalog for the "Exhibition of Works by the Italian Futurist Painters," Sackville Gallery, London, March 1912. This catalog, which accompanied the London venue of "Les Peintres Futuristes Italiens," includes English translations of both essays published in the Paris catalog and a translation of Marinetti's "Initial Manifesto of Futurism," first published in 1909. A checklist of works is annotated with descriptive texts by the director of the Sackville Gallery, R. R. Meyer-See, who purchased several of the six works sold between Paris and London.

← Sid Treeby, "Why Go to the Sackville Gallery?" the *Bystander* (London), 27 March 1912. Captioned "Passing events adequately 'Futurised,'" this cartoon parodies Futurist style in its rendering of a selection of current events, including the British miner's strike of 1912 and the women's suffrage movement.

↓ 'States of Mind' by Natural-Colour Photography: Paintings by the Italian Futurists Reproduced in the Newest Way," supplement to the *Sketch* (London), 20 March 1912. This feature reproduced Futurist works as examples of new techniques in color printing and photography. The spread includes three paintings by Boccioni and three by Severini, identified in the captions. More than one hundred reviews of this exhibition were published in the British press, most of them negative; Meyer-See wrote a review defending the exhibition for the Paris magazine *Gil Blas* in March 1912.

Ausstellung der Zeitschrift „DER STURM"

Herausgeber: HERWARTH WALDEN

Gemälde der Futuristen

Tiergartenstrasse 34a / Geöffnet von 10–6 Uhr / Eintritt 1 Mark

Manifest des Futurismus / von F. T. Marinetti

F. T. MARINETTI hält in der Ausstellung DER STURM / Tiergartenstr. 34a am Montag, den 22. April 1912 / 5½ Uhr / eine CONFÉRENCE über

FUTURISMUS

besonders über futuristische Malerei und die ausgestellten Gemälde

Die Wochenschrift DER STURM / Einzelbezug 20 Pfg. / ist überall erhältlich

Verlag DER STURM / Berlin W / Potsdamer Strasse 15

↑ This poster announces the second stop of the exhibition at Galerie Der Sturm in Berlin, April–May 1912. A translation of Marinetti's Futurist manifesto occupies most of the poster; at the bottom is an announcement of a conference on Futurism that was to be held at the gallery on 22 April 1912. While in town for the exhibition, Marinetti reportedly rented a taxi and drove around the city, tossing Futurist tracts and leaflets out the window and bellowing revolutionary statements.

↗ Galerie Der Sturm, Tiergartenstrasse 34a, Berlin. Herwarth Walden, proprietor of the gallery and editor of the journal of the same name, was a strong supporter of the Futurist movement.

Umfang acht Seiten

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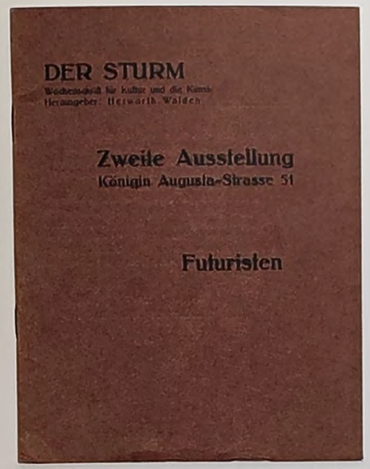
Oskar Kokoschka: Zeichnung

Gedankenloses.

Gemeinsamer Antwort in Berlin

→ Cover of *Der Sturm* no. 104, Berlin, March 1912. This issue contains the German translation of Marinetti's Futurist manifesto. *Der Sturm* published many Futurist texts in German, including the "Technical Manifesto of Futurist Painting" (no. 103, March 1912), "The Exhibitors to the Public" (no. 105, April 1912), and the "Manifesto of the Futurist Woman" by Valentine de Saint-Point (no. 108, May 1912). Issue no. 108 also contained a letter from the Berlin chief of police, Hermann F. Wirth, to *Der Sturm* demanding that the magazine stop publishing Futurist material.



← Cover of the catalog for "Zweite Ausstellung Futuristen" [Second Exhibition of the Futurists], Galerie Der Sturm, Berlin, April–May 1912. The catalog for the second stop of the exhibition, Berlin, includes the German translation of "The Exhibitors to the Public" and Marinetti's Futurist manifesto of 1909. A total of 24 works from the Berlin venue were sold, including Carrà's *Funeral of the Anarchist Galli*.

↙ Cover of the annotated checklist of works in "Die Futuristen" [The Futurists], 1912. Published in Berlin by the Society for the Promotion of Modern Art/Der Sturm, the checklist contains descriptions of the works in three languages—German, English, and Danish—and is most likely the catalog that accompanied the traveling exhibition to various European venues, including Brussels, Munich, and Amsterdam.

↓ André Tridon, "The Futurists, Latest Comers in the World of Art," the *Sun* (New York), 25 February 1912. This article, published concurrently with the exhibition "Les Peintres Futuristes Italiens" at Galerie Bernheim-Jeune, Paris, explores the "Aims and Methods of the Futurists and Effects They Seek to Produce." A portrait of each artist accompanies his work.

The FUTURISTS, LATEST COMERS in the WORLD of ART
New Conception of Perspective and Dimension Which Makes Their Paintings Seem Odd When Judged by Ordinary Standards—Aims and Methods of the Futurists and Effects They Seek to Produce.

Exhibition of Works by the Italian Futurist Painters [exh. cat.]

The Exhibitors to the Public

UMBERTO BOCCIONI, CARLO D. CARRÀ, LUIGI RUSSOLO, GIACOMO BALLA, AND GINO SEVERINI

London, 1912

—

We may declare, without boasting, that the first Exhibition of Italian Futurist Painting, recently held in Paris and now brought to London, is the most important exhibition of Italian paintings which has hitherto been offered to the judgment of Europe.

For we are young and our art is violently revolutionary.

What we have attempted and accomplished, while attracting around us a large number of skilful imitators and as many plagiarists without talent, has placed us at the head of the European movement in painting, by a road different from, yet, in a way, parallel with that followed by the Post-impressionists, Synthetists and Cubists of France, led by their masters Picasso, Braque, Derain, Metzinger, Le Faucomnier, Gleizes, Léger, Lhote, etc.

While we admire the heroism of these painters of great worth, who have displayed a laudable contempt for artistic commercialism and a powerful hatred of academism, we feel ourselves to be absolutely opposed to their art.

They obstinately continue to paint objects motionless, frozen, and all the static aspects of Nature; they worship the traditionalism of Poussin, of Ingres, of Corot, ageing and petrifying their art with an obstinate attachment to the past, which to our eyes remains totally incomprehensible.

We, on the contrary, with points of view pertaining essentially to the future, seek for a style of motion, a thing which has never been attempted before us.

Far from resting upon the examples of the Greeks and the Old Masters, we constantly extol individual intuition; our object is to determine completely new laws which may deliver painting from the wavering uncertainty in which it lingers.

Our desire, to give as far as possible to our pictures a solid construction, can never bear us back to any tradition whatsoever. Of that we are firmly convinced.

All the truths learnt in the schools or in the studios are abolished for us. Our hands are free enough and pure enough to start everything afresh.

It is indisputable that several of the aesthetic declarations of our French comrades display a sort of masked academism.

Is it not, indeed, a return to the Academy to declare that the subject, in painting, is of a perfectly insignificant value?

We declare, on the contrary, that there can be no modern painting without the starting point of an absolutely modern sensation, and none can contradict us when we state that *painting* and *sensation* are two inseparable words.

If our pictures are futurist, it is because they are the result of absolutely futurist conceptions, ethical, aesthetic, political and social.

To paint from the posing model is an absurdity, and an act of mental cowardice, even if the model be translated upon the picture in linear, spherical or cubic forms.

To lend an allegorical significance to an ordinary nude figure, deriving the meaning of the picture from the objects held by the model or from those which are arranged about him, is to our mind the evidence of a traditional and academic mentality.

This method, very similar to that employed by the Greeks, by Raphael, by Titian, by Veronese, must necessarily displease us.

While we repudiate impression, we emphatically condemn the present reaction which, in order to kill impressionism, brings back painting to old academic forms.

It is only possible to react against impressionism by surpassing it.

Nothing is more absurd than to fight it by adopting the pictural laws which preceded it.

The points of contact which the quest of style may have with the so-called *classic art* do not concern us.

Others will seek, and will, no doubt, discover, these analogies which in any case cannot be looked upon as a return to methods, conceptions and values transmitted by classical painting.

A few examples will illustrate our theory.

We see no difference between one of those nude figures commonly called *artistic* and an anatomical plate. There is, on the other hand, an enormous difference between one of these nude figures and our futurist conception of the human body.

Perspective, such as it is understood by the majority of painters, has for us the very same value which they lend to an engineer's design.

The simultaneousness of states of mind in the work of art: that is the intoxicating aim of our art.

Let us explain again by examples. In painting a person on a balcony, seen from inside the room, we do not limit the scene to what the square frame of the window renders visible; but we try to render the sum total of visual sensations which the person on the balcony has experienced; the sunbathed throng in the street, the double row of houses which stretch to right and left, the beflowered balconies, etc. This implies the simultaneousness of the ambient, and, therefore, the dislocation and dismemberment of objects, the scattering and fusion of details, freed from accepted logic, and independent from one another.

In order to make the spectator live in the centre of the picture, as we express it in our manifesto, the picture must be the synthesis of *what one remembers* and of *what one sees*.

You must render the invisible which stirs and lives beyond intervening obstacles, what we have on the right, on the left, and behind us, and not merely the small square of life artificially compressed, as it were, by the wings of a stage.

We have declared in our manifesto that what must be rendered is the *dynamic sensation*, that is to say, the particular rhythm of each object, its inclination, its movement, or, to put it more exactly, its interior force.

It is usual to consider the human being in its different aspects of motion or stillness, of joyous excitement or grave melancholy.

What is overlooked is that all inanimate objects display, by their lines, calmness or frenzy, sadness or gaiety. These various tendencies lend to the lines of which they are formed a sense and character of weighty stability or of aerial lightness.

Every object reveals by its lines how it would resolve itself were it to follow the tendencies of its forces.

This decomposition is not governed by fixed laws but it varies according to the characteristic personality of the object and the emotions of the onlooker.

Furthermore, every object influences its neighbour, not by reflections of light (the foundation of *impressionistic primitivism*), but by a real competition of lines and by real conflicts of planes, following the emotional law which governs the picture (the foundation of *futurist primitivism*).

With the desire to intensify the aesthetic emotions by blending, so to speak, the painted canvas with the soul of the spectator, we have declared that the latter "*must in future be placed in the centre of the picture.*"

He shall not be present at, but participate in the action. If we paint the phases of a riot, the crowd bustling with uplifted fists and the noisy onslaughts of cavalry are translated upon the canvas in sheaves of lines corresponding with all the conflicting forces, following the general law of violence of the picture.

These *force-lines* must encircle and involve the spectator so that he will in a manner be forced to struggle himself with the persons in the picture.

All objects, in accordance with what the painter Boccioni happily terms *physical transcendentalism*, tend to the infinite by their *force-lines* the continuity of which is measured by our intuition.

It is these *force-lines* that we must draw in order to lead back the work of art to true painting. We interpret nature by rendering these objects upon the canvas as the beginnings or the prolongations of the rhythms impressed upon our sensibility by these very objects.

After having, for instance, reproduced in a picture the right shoulder or the right ear of a figure, we deem it totally vain and useless to reproduce the left shoulder or the left ear. We do not draw sounds, but their vibrating intervals. We do not paint diseases, but their symptoms and their consequences.

We may further explain our idea by a comparison drawn from the evolution of music.

Not only have we radically abandoned the motive fully developed according to its determined and, therefore, artificial equilibrium, but we suddenly and purposely intersect each motive with one or more other motives of which we never give the full development but merely the initial, central, or final notes.

As you see, there is with us not merely variety, but chaos and clashing of rhythms, totally opposed to one another, which we nevertheless assemble into a new harmony.

We thus arrive at what we call the *painting of states of mind*.

In the pictural description of the various states of mind of a leave-taking, perpendicular lines, undulating and as it were worn out, clinging here and there to silhouettes of empty bodies, may well express languidness and discouragement.

Confused and trepidating lines, either straight or curved, mingled with the outlined hurried gestures of people calling one another, will express a sensation of chaotic excitement.

On the other hand, horizontal lines, fleeting, rapid and jerky, brutally cutting into half lost profiles of faces or crumbling and rebounding fragments of landscape, will give the tumultuous feelings of the person going away.

It is practically impossible to express in words the essential values of painting.

The public must also be convinced that in order to understand the aesthetic sensations to which one is not accustomed, it is necessary to forget entirely one's intellectual culture, not in order to *assimilate* the work of art, but to *deliver one's self up* to it heart and soul.

We are beginning a new epoch of painting.

We are sure henceforward of realising conceptions of the highest importance and the most unquestionable originality. Others will follow who, with equal daring and determination, will conquer those summits of which we can only catch a glimpse. That is why we have proclaimed ourselves to be *the primitives of a completely renovated sensitiveness.*

In several of the pictures which we are presenting to the public, vibration and motion endlessly multiply each object. We have thus justified our famous statement regarding the "*running horse which has not four legs, but twenty.*"

One may remark, also, in our pictures spots, lines, zones of colour which do not correspond to any reality, but which, in accordance with a law of our interior mathematics, musically prepare and enhance the emotion of the spectator.

We thus create a sort of emotive ambience, seeking by intuition the sympathies and the links which exist between the exterior (concrete) scene and the interior (abstract) emotion. Those lines, those spots, those zones of colour, apparently illogical and meaningless, are the mysterious keys to our pictures.

We shall no doubt be taxed with an excessive desire to define and express in tangible form the subtle ties which unite our abstract interior with the concrete exterior.

Yet, could we leave an unfettered liberty of understanding to the public which always sees as it has been taught to see, through eyes warped by routine?

We go our way, destroying each day in ourselves and in our pictures the realistic forms and the obvious details which have served us to construct a bridge of understanding between ourselves and the public. In order that the crowd may enjoy our marvellous spiritual world, of which it is ignorant, we give it the material sensation of that world.

We thus reply to the coarse and simplistic curiosity which surrounds us by the brutally realistic aspects of our primitivism.

Conclusion: Our futurist painting embodies three new conceptions of painting:

1. That which solves the question of volumes in a picture, as opposed to the liquefaction of objects favoured by the vision of the impressionists.

2. That which leads us to translate objects according to the *force-lines* which distinguish them, and by which is obtained an absolutely new power of objective poetry.

3. That (the natural consequences of the other two) which would give the emotional ambience of a picture, the synthesis of the various abstract rhythms of every object, from which there springs a fount of pictural lyricism hitherto unknown.

N.B.–All the ideas contained in this preface were developed at length in the lecture on Futurist Painting, delivered by the painter, Boccioni, at the Circolo Internazionale Artistico, at Rome, on May 29th, 1911.

"Les Futuristes"

LOUIS VAUXCELLES

Gil Blas — Paris, February 1912

—

The most entertaining thing about this episode is the way it has made our gallant Cubists pull such long faces. Barely three months have passed since their notorious collective attack of epilepsy, and they find themselves outdone, cheated by this Italian gang.

It is effectively a sort of one-upmanship. Each of us seems merely "traditionalist" to someone.

And innocent Metzinger, and even more so Luc des Olivier-Mersons, have become victims of the incendiary hands of their Milanese colleagues.

In truth, in the very intriguing and very intelligently written preface to the exhibition catalog, the contribution of the aforementioned innocent Metzinger is acknowledged. He is treated there as an absurd hero. "Hero" is good, but "absurd" is rather harsh. I call this catalog preface intelligently written because, in the midst of accusations of affectation, of cold-bloodied fervor, and among all the jargon and neologisms (*passéism*, *transcendentalism*, and other such notions), it outlines a theory of dynamism, of *lines of force*, which is by no means the product of an empty brain.

It is not, however, in the preface, but on the gallery walls that one looks at the work of the painters. Written manifestos do not matter a great deal. What interests us is not so much the "defense and illustration of the French language" (however admirably this feat has been performed), but the *Ode to the Lumberjacks of the Forêt de Gastyne* [L'ode aux bûcherons de la forêt de Gastyne]. What we enjoy in Romanticism is its desperate lyricism, its verbal magnificence and not the confused eloquence of Cromwell's preface. Theorists come along *after* pictures have been painted, in order to comment upon them. A language is born and then develops; then its grammarians come on the scene.

I recall, too, a remark attributed to Lautrec, which one is not permitted to write but that you perhaps know: "Painting is like . . . , *you can smell it!*"

As for this Futurist painting: notwithstanding its shrillness, its stammering, its convulsions, and in spite of its effect on the man in the street (with his curled-up moustache but his eyes popping out of his head), it has no smell. It is a concoction patiently elaborated by overexcited simpletons. I am reminded of the immortal Père Ubu shouting at the top of his voice about his own particular style of buffoonery: "I killed everyone by driving a little wooden stake into their ears and then I put it in my pocket." How we laughed.

We already know the cruel and clamorous *verismo* of Italian Modernist music. And we know their contemporary politics, those of a snapping mongrel. Today we are witness to the complacent blossoming of their pictorial aesthetic.

But all this is of no importance. Such puerile antics simply cannot be taken seriously. The Italian term for bluff is *beffa*. We've already had the Cubists (as Hugo might have said, inside every Cubist you'll find a biste, or beast, crushing sensitivity underfoot in the name of reason . . . and the cult of volume). As for these illiterates, barely out of school, we never cease to remind them that no artist is complete until he unites a quivering sensibility with a pious and tender love of nature and a deep feeling for decorative curves and expressive volumes. Poussin, whom our gentlemen of Paris and Milan claim as one of their own without properly knowing his work, was nothing more nor less. And that is why we venerate him still. I would add just one thing: if the Futurists think that they are the first to have translated into plastic form the frenetic movement of speed, they are mistaken. Claude Monet and Turner created truly enduring works of art by painting trains tearing along at full speed.

I will now say a quick word or two on the exhibited works: Mr. Boccioni's *Larvae* [Les larves] is a tame plagiarism of Braque and of Picasso. Mr. Carrè has a certain fire, seemingly absorbed from Rouault, though lacking in that artist's dark and barbaric blue-red harmonies, which he replaces with acidic purplish-blue tones, while also reminding me of some poor pupil of Moreau exhibiting his wares at the "Artistes Français." Mr. Russolo is hardly any better. His violet tones are as hideous as his bloody reds. The enormous bright jigsaw puzzle devised by Mr. Severini veritably screams at us. One has to screw up one's eyes (even close them, perhaps) in order to make out a few entertaining details in this harly-burly.

Mr. Balla is featured only in the catalog. None of his pictures is in the display at rue Richepanse. This is a great pity.

Leaving the Galerie Bernheim-Jeune, where the charming Félix Fénéon failed to persuade me, let alone convert me (and this despite employing all the refinements of one of the most subtle intellects I know), I looked at the two fine busts of Renoir and of Guillaumin made by the sculptor-physician Paulin.

Recalling the immense output of these two masters—altogether unencumbered by intellectual pretensions and theories—I understood that the painting of Guillaumin and of Renoir is a great deal simpler than all these quaint excesses.

"Les Peintres Futuristes Italiens"

GUILLAUME APOLLINAIRE

L'Intransigeant — Paris, 7 February 1912

—

"The simultaneity of states of mind in the work of art: this is the intoxicating goal that we have set ourselves."

This declaration by the Italian Futurist painters reveals, at once and the same time, the originality and the weakness of their painting. They wish to paint forms in movement, a perfectly legitimate desire; and yet they share with most of the painters they would themselves dismiss as "traditionalist" an obsession with painting states of mind. While our own most advanced painters no longer treat any identifiable subject in their pictures, it is often the subject that is the most interesting thing in a "traditionalist" work. The Italian Futurists presume to retain all the advantages of treating a subject, and this may well prove to be the obstacle on which their good artistic intentions will come to grief.

The Futurists are young painters to whom we would feel obliged to give the benefit of the doubt were it not that the boastfulness of their pronouncements and the insolence of their manifestos tends to deflect the indulgence that we are inclined to show toward them.

They declare themselves "absolutely opposed" to the work of the most extreme exponents of the French School, and yet they are no more than their imitators.

Take Boccioni, who strikes me as the most gifted of the Futurist painters. The influence of Picasso is as undeniable here as it is in all contemporary painting. The best of Boccioni's pictures is the one that is the most directly inspired by the latest paintings of Picasso. It even includes the stenciled numbers that give Picasso's recent work such a simple and imposing air of reality.

The titles of Futurist pictures often seem to borrow from the vocabulary of Unanism. For the Futurists distrust syntheses that do not achieve a translation into plastic form and lead only to the cold allegory of "traditionalist" painting.

One needs to look with some care at *The Pan-Pan Dance at the Monico* [La danse du Pan-Pan à Monico], which is the most important work so far to come from a Futurist brush. It is a canvas where movement is rendered so well and where the optical mixing of colors is so deftly resisted that everything functions exactly as the artist desires. I like rather less the other pictures by Severini, which are too influenced by the technique of the Neo-Impressionists and by the forms of van Dongen. We should also mention Carrà, a more vulgar version of our own Rouault, and whose work sometimes recalls the Academicism of the now forgotten painter Mérodack-Jeaneau.

Russolo is the Italian Futurist least influenced by the young French painters. We need to look to Munich or to Moscow to find the artists who have influenced him. One day we will come upon his work again and find that it has become more truly pictorial.

The young Futurist painters may well be able to hold their own in competition with a few of our most advanced artists, but they are still no more than the weak followers of Picasso or Derain. And, when it comes to grace of that they don't have the faintest idea.

"Les Futuristes Italiens"

GUSTAVE KAHN

Le Mercure de France — Paris, 1 March 1912

—

At the Galerie Bernheim-Jeune there has been no end of excitement in response to the canvases of the Italian Futurists. Equally lively have been the disputes their work has provoked. Since the first days of Pointillism we have not encountered such emotion and such determination to come and feel something of the holy anger of the Academicians confronting painting of such audacity. On this occasion, it has to be said, it is by no means only the Academicians who have been enraged, but also people who are more or less accustomed to the most vigorous novelties. This is, of course, understandable, and the detractors have themselves invoked two types of argument.

For one thing, the Futurists boldly attempt a literary and immensely complex type of painting. On the other hand, their painting technique makes no allowance for either the opacity of bodies or the resilience of planes. This may well be the first time that such an approach has been adopted. In favor of the Futurists (even though this argument drawn from the past may displease them), one may observe that the Primitives never hesitated to recount many episodes of the same story within the same painted surface, even though isolating them from each other a little more. And just because no one until now has envisaged painting as a means of presenting simultaneous impressions of successive states of mind within a single canvas, this is no reason for not trying to do so at all. It appears that the influence of Rodin and his own theory of volumes have reached the Futurists, who of course also know the work of Rosso. They likewise know the French Cubists and have certain points of contact with them in so far as their approach to drawing is concerned; they are, however, distinct when it comes to color, the Cubists preferring it to be dark while the Futurists wish it to be blazing and impassioned. Another defining characteristic is that the Futurists seek to introduce into their canvases certain formal harmonies intended, in each case, to establish the principal compositional rhythms. These harmonies are of two kinds: linear, as in the picture *The Funeral of the Anarchist Galli* [Les funérailles de l'anarchiste Galli], where Carrà evokes the continuing battle by means of the bundled cudgels that stripe the canvas; or mosaic, as in the portraits of Severini, who arranges a simple patchwork of pale tones so as to allow the eye to pass easily from one to the next.

It is, of course, necessary to bring a fair degree of patience to the process of looking at a Futurist picture, which at first glance may astonish the spectator with its extraordinary linear complexity. Once one has applied oneself to studying the work in question, one can very easily "read" it, and it is then that one recognizes that one is dealing with artists who are committed colorists, very willful, and—most essential of all—possessed of a genuine talent.

To see that Boccioni's *The City Rises* [La ville qui monte] is a very fine work, one only has to think about its furious and spirited movement of horses and workers in the foreground and its view into an opening cone of concentrated light and sheer physical force, and the pacifying element of the vertical forms of the scaffolding that fill out the lower and upper parts of the canvas. Look, too, at Carrà's *Leaving the Theater* [La sortie de théâtre]: one would have to be negatively prejudiced in order not to be struck by the luminous beauty of this canvas, the finely nuanced firmness of the forms of the women in hooded cloaks, the vigorous, impassioned movement of all of these figures. Looking at *The Pan-Pan Dance at the Monico* [La danse du Pan-Pan à Monico], it is impossible to deny the fine élan of the bodies of the dancers that form the group at the center of the composition, the prettiness of the episode to the left with a woman descending the staircase (incorporated into the overall composition in the Futurist manner), and the sheer life pulsating within the crowd. One here needs to understand that it is only by dint of a fair amount of artifice that painters usually represent a crowd in their pictures, relying on a series of individual sketches finally combined so as to allow us to see all the details of all the faces. A truer representation would resemble the amalgam of shapes and faces that Mr. Severini gives us—which incidentally includes a number of excellent details.

Mr. Russolo's painting *Revolt* [Révolte] would not arouse in us such surprise if this composition were presented to us in the form of a poster, for it possesses linear qualities that combine certainty and unexpectedness and give it the visual fascination of a fine example of graphic art. And to appreciate the veracity of his *Train at Full Speed* [Le train en vitesse], all we really have to do is recall any recent train journey we have made at night or how trains appear to us when we view them from a distance.

Here, then, are four painters whom one can readily admire if one takes the trouble to look attentively at their work. And one can expect them all to develop rapidly. The element of simplification and schematization to be found in their pictures proves that they combine a knowledge of the technique required of their art with an audacity that is often its own reward.

Does it, then, follow that they have been right in seeking to render states of mind by means of a selection of horizontal and vertical lines? It seems not. And yet the scientific aspect of aesthetics would say "yes." Perhaps all we have here is a way of drawing an artistic innovation to our attention, of presenting us with a new stylistic discovery to be explored.

The Futurists' particular type of psychological portrait, where the world is not at all presented to us as it is and as if recorded on a plane picture surface, but rather is fragmented or evoked through details that correspond, in the painter's memory, to one of the facial expressions of his patiently observed model: is this a viable approach to portraiture? Without doubt: no. It offers too much precision for a mere decorative design, and too little to meet the requirements of what we understand as a portrait. However, having said that, and without necessarily accepting all

the Futurists" theories or their practical applications, we can nonetheless have a certain degree of confidence in them, and one that draws further strength from a sense of shared endeavor. For each of them exhibits here at least one canvas that is truly and undeniably striking.

I had hoped to be able to go into more detail concerning the theory of the Futurists and to put my objections to this, and to compare their own aesthetic with that of the French Cubists, whose particular importance is in no way diminished by the achievements of these Italians; but I have already more than overstepped the limits of what would be permissible even during a fortnight where the exhibition program was not so full. So, following the Salons, if not earlier, I will return to these new systems of aesthetics, to the Cubists and the Futurists.

"Round the Galleries: The Futurist Painters" [excerpt]

FRANK RUTTER

Sunday Times — London, 10 March 1912

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THE DANGER OF DESIGN

... The danger lurking in this one-sided pursuit of design is that young painters are apt to look for it in preceding paintings rather than in nature. That is the way to plagiarism, to fantastic theorising, mental arithmetic in paint, and all manner of foolishness. Nothing pleased me more last week than to hear that the National Gallery and other museums were closed to the public in view of the Suffragist disturbances. Here is a blessing in disguise, for what could be more helpful to the young painter of to-day than to close all the picture galleries and make him go and look at nature with his own eyes? In the early twenties of last century, when there was some talk of starting a National Gallery here, that great artist and reverent lover of nature, John Constable, viewed the project with utmost concern. He feared that its establishment might seduce students into painting from pictures instead of painting from nature, and how terribly are his fears justified to-day. Not only here but all over Europe young men and women are painting from pictures instead of from nature. That is my first bone of contention with the Italian Futurists. I do not say that they never look at nature—one of them evidently has done so with good effect—but generally speaking they are painting from the extreme wing of the Salon d'Automne and the Galerie Kahnweiler. All their little novelties have already been paraded in Paris by men as able and abler than themselves. Further, while they 'repudiate impressionism' they make use, often ill-advised, of divisionist technique, and all their more intelligible works are more or less impressions of actualities. That many of their exhibits are inexpressively incoherent stands self-confessed by a catalogue which contains some thirty pages of text to explain thirty-four paintings. This orgy in letterpress immediately excites distrust in those who know that there are only two sorts of paintings worth looking at, those which show without comment, and those which themselves comment whilst they show. ...

"'The Futurist 'Devil-among-the-Tailors'" [excerpt]

WALTER SICKERT

English Review — London, April 1912

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Let it be granted that to be a member of the Royal Academy does not in itself confer talent. Let it further be granted that to be a member of the New English Art Club does not in itself confer talent. Nor, further, can the impartial seeker after truth deny that talent is not conferred by affiliation to Mr. Fry, or by membership of the Kentish-town, or even the Somers-town group. Lest the writer be accused of Xenophilism, let him add these further postulates. To be a member of the French Impressionists did not in itself confer talent. To call oneself a Post-Impressionist did not in itself confer talent, and, lastly, to be an avowed and militant Futurist is in itself no guarantee of pictorial ability.

It is curious how inexactly the Press will occasionally mirror the public opinion of the town. The *Morning Post* was lucky in the possession of one of the most amusing, readable and learned art critics in the person of Mr. Robert Ross. Right or wrong in his opinions, his articles carried the organ of the gentry into numberless intellectual homes to whom fashionable intelligence is as naught. In the exercise of his duty it seems that Mr. Ross prepared an article on the Futurist Exhibition. I am told that this could not be published on the plea that the Futurist Exhibition was in itself an immorality, and must not be chronicled! I was, therefore, rather surprised to find the tiny galleries in Sackville Street packed with an orderly crowd, consisting mostly of the mothers of England, who were circulating slowly, and verifying, with reverence, the statements in the descriptive catalogue by the pictures on the walls. Here and there, a grandfather of distinguished appearance was pointing out to a delicious granddaughter the obvious beauties of the pictures, and the sound reasoning of the accompanying tracts.

One thing the Futurist movement certainly is not, and that is, immoral. Austere, bracing, patriotic, positive, anti-anarchistic, anti-sentimental, anti-feminist, what Prudhon calls anti-pornocratic, the movement is one from which we in England have a good deal to learn. This is not to say that we are to accept the manifestoes in their literal entirety. We must remember that language in Italy is a far more florid and coloured thing than with us. Sir Claude Phillips is perhaps the only writer of *coloratura* we have left. Have we not been told that when it was necessary to have the Coronation 'written up' it had to be done by an Italian writer in Italian, and then translated into English?

The idea at the root of the Futurist movement is health itself. It aims at creating a 'contagion of courage.' It would teach us that a healthy intellectual life, a healthy political life, is based on active concern with the present and the future, and not on hypnotism by the past. In order that a salutary truth may penetrate the shell of inertia and habit in which humanity will ever lap itself, the most monstrous exaggerations may do good service. Fulminations that are easy to ridicule and confute, may, by the spirit they arouse and the atmosphere they create, serve as effective engines of beneficent force.

The Futurist movement is essentially a movement of Italian patriotism, and centres round the work, the person, and the ideas of F. T. Marinetti, the author of *Mafarka il Futurista*, *Distruzione*, *La Ville Charnelle*, and *La Conquête des Étoiles*. The prelude of the movement may be found in the columns of the Paris *Figaro*, and its continuation in Marinetti's five years' editorship of the international review *Poesia*. Among the Futurist poets are G. P. Lucini, Paolo Buzzi, Cavacchioli, Palazzeschi, Govoni, De Maria, Armando Mazza, Folgore, Libero Altomare, and Mario Betuda. And now the beauty-sleep of Sir Philip Burne-Jones has been disturbed for the third time by the sudden explosion in Sackville Street, next door to Whistler's tailor, of this strange artistic camorra, like the firework that is described in Messrs. Brock's catalogue as *The Devil-among-the-Tailors*.

The Futurist movement confesses to a literary origin; and the alliance of the pen with the brush has its dangers for both. No amount of explanatory doctrine and militant defence will make a bad draughtsman into a good one. Painting that requires literary explanation stands self-condemned. Here we have the condemnation of Matisse and Picasso, and even of most of Cézanne's canvases.

And on the same principle do some of the Futurists justify themselves in some of their pictures. I should myself, if I had a collection, like to possess the *Traveling Impressions* of Severini, or Boccioni's *The Street Enters the House*. His large canvas, *The Rising City*, is workmanlike and lucid, and owes these qualities to an intelligent study of the past. Besnard and Constantin Meunier have had a part in it. His *Police Raid*, again, is a vivid essay in lurid drama.

Simultaneous representations of successive impressions were not invented by the Futurists. You may find, by many a primitive painter, the birth, marriage and death of a person represented on the same canvas. I remember seeing in Brussels, twenty years ago, a well-known picture in the Wiertz Gallery that recounts the impressions received by the brain of a man in the act of being guillotined. These impressions are recorded as belonging to the first, second and third seconds after the severing of the head from the body. Whether the three impressions are united on one canvas, or not, I cannot remember. In Turner's later pictures simultaneous visions are painted of ice-cold passages juxtaposed to hot ones in a manner that is frankly impossible and unnatural. But they remain works of great beauty and interest, in spite of their fantastic nature. The Futurists may claim the same freedom as we allow the old masters. Indeed, the word 'allow' is ridiculous. The human race, in its ingenuity and curiosity, will rush through any porch where it seems to perceive light, whether we call the road forbidden wickedness or not. There are caves in art that lead somewhere, and others that are bottoms of sacks. ...

"Die Bilder der Futuristen"

ALFRED DÖBLIN

Der Sturm — Berlin, May 1912

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A number of remarks by way of introduction. First of all, regarding how one looks at these pictures. Just as in the case of a symphony, a quartet, a stage play, it goes without saying that we have to look and listen attentively; the very difficulty of understanding, the slow process of penetrating the work, is indeed seen as one of its characteristics, as a measure of its value. In the case of painting and sculpture, this is not so. Here, one has to more or less wait for enlightenment to strike. As one walks through an exhibition, with every turn of one's head one brings down an artistic judgment, just as boys pick off sparrows in a shooting match. And therein resides the fundamental drawback of the work of the Futurists. They insist that we devote a certain amount of time to it. Each picture is a poem, a novel, a stage play; one cannot "read" it in two minutes. One needs a great deal more time for the Futurists than for the Pointillists and the Impressionists; one cannot get away with taking just four paces toward the opposite wall and then "about turn to the right." A picture requires interpretation. It sets us a task. In return for the entrance fee of one mark we do not get sixty works of art, but sixty tasks. An exhibition is not a beer hall. And you cannot buy Futurist paintings, as if they were novels, in cheap paperback editions. The work of art demands discipline, intellectual penetration, effort. And yet more effort. It is this, or rather the lack of it, that accounts for all the misunderstandings. There is insufficient effort on the part of a public, a public spoiled and infantilized by a diet of pre-prepared, easy-to-digest food. Those looking at pictures should, in any case, keep their mouths shut; the gods have given us minds, not mouths, with which to form judgments. No work of art simply falls from the sky; and even less so the understanding we need to bring to it. Our first impression tells us just as little as the tenth may; only the twentieth will, perhaps, shed a glimmer of light. The spectator has to learn from the picture he observes, has to penetrate its spirit. Standing in front of it he should be filled with a sense of the honor of being admitted to this privileged place. No instance of progress in the visual arts will ever mean anything to the masses—whether they live in one of the poorest or one of the most fashionable districts of town—if they have not been taught, from their earliest years, be it by teachers, critics, or connoisseurs, what they, the masses, are. And what they are is stupid, virtually insensible, predisposed toward cretinism, a hindrance to any true form of progress, detested by anyone of a truly artistic sensibility. They must, accordingly, flock to artists, as the only true experts, and grovel before them, even when these artists do nothing in return but spit at them and trample them underfoot.

Futurism is not in itself a principle, and it has no principles. But we can, invoking the plural, say that it has principles, in the sense that it offers fundamental insights. As a painter, for example, the Futurist eschews the theatrical gesture. It is little short of astonishing that painters did not long ago recognize the parallels between their own work and that of stagehands. For in front of the picture there lies an area reserved for spectators, as in a theater; and each picture is "posed" in front of these spectators. But this is fundamentally to the detriment of art and is not worthy of art in its truly secret, isolated and self-absorbed character. The chief Futurist imperative is "écrasez l'infâme:" crush infamy or, more specifically, crush the spectator. A Futurist picture is possessed of its own center. Should it, then, be viewed as an enormous novelty, or as something rather dubious? What if such a picture happens to resemble an X-ray image, riddled with holes from front to back, thoroughly imbued with light, its human figures and its thick, well-made walls appearing transparent? We are not dealing here with the sciences, or some questionable right to which painters have laid claim, but with a painter's due right to follow the dictates of his own imagination in seeing however and whatever he will—and not in the manner of Tom, Dick, or Harry, who would be simply baffled by a Futurist painting. It is the painter's soul yet again laying claim to the territory that has always been its own. For—and this is by no means a novelty—painting is an art. Eyes are blind, ears are deaf, the soul alone sees and hears.

There is no point in painting some scene or other that one has experienced. Or, rather, this is only worthwhile in certain circumstances, in certain happily aggravated circumstances. Who, among poets, let alone among more routine scribblers, is capable of capturing and compressing into a single page of text the intensity of a power-

ful feeling?! Who can come up with more than mere catchwords? And the one who does succeed will almost certainly have done so through devising some sort of artifice. Just look at the painters of earlier centuries: that frantic effort of the better among them to be intense and animated in every particular, to infuse every corner with feeling. All this anxiety. For the available space is so terribly small, and in the end, one is forced to acknowledge failure: the outcome is not even half, not even a quarter, of what one had sought to achieve. And then, with a shove, the Futurist is on the scene making space for himself, shaking off the nightmare that weighs upon his chest. What, after all, is his most important theme? Certainly not some stupid, lifeless scene or object, but the artist's self—me, me, and nothing but me. What, after all, are waves, mountains, faces, colors and lines, compared to me! The Futurist is not a copier, he is a creator. The point is to animate everything. And, indeed, this is what all the best painters have always thought. How visible are the principles of painting, the formal interrelations, where force, sweetness, tenderness and sudden rage are all determined to find expression! Just look at Boccioni's picture *The Laugh* [Das Lachen]. Here the painter is dancing like a drunkard around a lady's hat, the hat itself seeming to revolve as he observed it from above, from the right, from the left, and then diagonally. The painter's eyes cannot get enough of the reflecting marble tabletop, which recurs, refracted, throughout the picture, as its effective leitmotif. And repeatedly we see the red flame that signals a pair of hands lighting a cigarette. The face of Severini's restless dancer passes twice across the canvas in a violet-toned blur as she twirls before us. She is also observed by an admirer, his top hat pushed back on his head, and two sulphurous yellow cat's eyes peer out from the bottom of the picture. There is no foreground, no background, no time, no space; everything floats calmly above a primeval abyss—and that is how you paint a "portrait"!

The painter has at his disposal not merely one dimension, the picture plane, which he must trick us into seeing as two or three; rather, he has an infinite number of dimensions, as many as his imagination allows. The Futurist train roars over the iron rails; but we do not see it, we see only the bells of the diagonally sloping telegraph poles; and the distorted, listless, tired faces that fly through the dim wind like those of ghosts. Time and space are dislocated. Oh, it is so cheap and easy to dismiss it all as literary, unpainterly. How little there is that you recognize as painterly, how impoverished and wretched is your notion of art. And this is because you have no sense of the freedom experienced by the creative spirit, a freedom in which all works of art find their justification, the psychic foundation from which every innovation emerges. This psychic foundation resembles a sudden storm; the steel-hard wing of a condor, to whose swooping and rustling our ears have to be especially attuned. Is it not the case that what we find in many of these pictures is like the egg of Columbus? Nothing in literature is more familiar to us than the notion of the supposed figurative dimension of language; but precisely for those who have most to do with the figurative in nature, it is a matter of "hands off!" They are expected to be true to nature in every detail, to hide behind the objects they depict like intimidated children fearful of yet another beating. We, from the world of literature, boldly plunge into all the world's oceans, traverse the dunes of all its deserts; glide with ease from the circle of King Rampsenit to that of the Caesars, and, if our hearts so desire, pay a visit to the little whore Lulu. Our words can satisfy a thirsty reader like the udders of a cow, but they are full of a sustenance far stronger than milk. Yet they, the painters, may express themselves only indirectly or by implication. How often has it been said that "the earth comes to life beneath the feet of the raging masses!" How true this sensation is—and yet what painter, until now, has actually painted this earthquake in all its convulsive reality? I have seen many a battlefield depicted on canvas, but I have looked in vain for a painting of battle that truly captures the grappling soldiers, the smell of gunpowder, the black cannons. Why do they not even have the courage of their convictions, of their own imagination, of their own experience? We need an avowal, a confession! The fury, the pity, the rage and the dread that is within you: out with it and on to the canvas. The soldiers ranged against you in your paintings are tin soldiers, the cannons pointing at you are made only of wood. You alone in this battle are made of iron. So join the battle! Are you not more than mere painters—are you not artists? Look at Russolo's picture *Revolt* [Die Revolution]: with outstretched arms, a thousand-strong procession, a frenzied, eerie herd belching forth red flames, with houses disappearing into a gray mist and crumbling before the crowd's advance, floating above it, before it, beside it, as if dispersed by the wind, as if no more than a disembodied phantom. Look at *The Pan-Pan Dance at the Monico* [Pan-Pan-Tanz] What is any kind of reality, even multiplied by a thousand, when we are concerned with art, with another, freer, prouder form of reality, with that of triumphing humanity? Humanity's victory over nature and its harnessing with machines have not been achieved with a sort of Promethean effort. And there are more burdens yet to be borne than bundles of wood and blocks of stone. For the artist, all nature and all reality need now be no more than the strong old cart-horse that he whips and that pulls his infinitely heavy cart. But in this cart are all his values. And it is this very cart that the old carthorse, with a great heave, succeeds in pulling along. But, if the artist so prefers, he can soar and dart about and buzz like a horsefly at the ears of the beast of burden, even stinging the old nag.

Futurism is a great step forward. It represents an act of liberation. It is not a particular artistic tendency, but an entire movement. Even more to the point, it is the forward movement of the artist. It is no longer a question of each individual work of art. It is deplorable that the land of "spirituality" should need to draw courage in itself from abroad. And it is from the land of colors and beautiful people that the lesson comes to us: the lesson that "the soul is everything." Our own painters engage in experiments, they study the laws of color, lines and planes. They are honest and upright—it is enough to make one laugh—while the house burns down around them.

I am no fan of great, inflated words. Yet I am willing and happy to sign up to Futurism with all my heart and to give it an unequivocal Yes.

09

Salon de la Section d'Or

Paris, 1912

LOCATION AND DATES
Galerie la Boétie, 64 bis, rue la Boétie, Paris, 10–30 October 1912

CURATORS
Guillaume Apollinaire, Marcel Duchamp, Raymond Duchamp-Villon, Pierre Dumont, Albert Gleizes, Jean Metzinger, Francis Picabia, Jacques Villon

ITINERARY
None

ARTISTS
Auguste Agero, Alexander Archipenko, Honoré Auclair, Marcel Duchamp, Raymond Duchamp-Villon, Pierre Dumont, Alexandra Exter, Démétrius Galanis, Albert Gleizes, Juan Gris, Réna Hassenberg, Roger de La Fresnaye, Marie Laurencin, Aleide Le Beau, Fernand Léger, Sonia Lewitska, André Lhote, Jean-Hippolyte Marchand, Louis Marcoussis, André Mare, Jean Metzinger, Luc-Albert Moreau, Francis Picabia, Georges Ribemont-Dessaignes, André Dunoyer de Segonzac, Eugène Tirvert, Félix Elie Tobeen, Henry Valensi, Paul Véra, Jacques Villon, Ernest-Frédéric Wield

EXHIBITION CATALOG
Salon de "La Section d'Or." Preface by René Blum. Paris: Galerie la Boétie, 1912.

RELATED PUBLICATION
La Section d'Or, no. 1. Essays by Guillaume Apollinaire, Marc Brésil, Gabriele Buffet, and Pierre Reverdy. 9 October 1912.

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
Number of artists: c. 31
Number of works: c. 185
Total attendance: unknown

A year and a half of the exhibitions and lively discussions of Cubism that had begun with the display in Room 41 of the 1911 Salon des Indépendants culminated with the "Salon de la Section d'Or" (Salon of the Golden Section). This was not the Cubism of Pablo Picasso and Georges Braque, however, for their work had not been seen in the primary French venues of advanced painting. (Their dealer, Daniel-Henry Kahnweiler, showed the paintings of Picasso and Braque abroad, but discouraged them from entering the Parisian salons.) It was Jean Metzinger, Albert Gleizes, Henri Le Fauconnier, Fernand Léger, and Robert Delaunay that the public knew as "Les Cubistes" from the 1911 exhibition. The outcry that greeted their work during that initial presentation grew even louder at the following Salon d'Automne. Because that juried show was thought to represent a higher artistic standard, the Cubists' work appeared even more outrageous.

Soon a large group of sympathetic artists and writers began meeting in the Paris suburbs—on Sundays in the garden of the Duchamp brothers and on Mondays in Gleizes's studio—where they discussed topics ranging from non-Euclidean geometry and the fourth dimension to the role of art in dealing with the speed and fragmentation of modern life. There was a growing sense of common enterprise shared by those working in the faceted mode of Salon Cubism, but the precipitating cause of the "Salon de la Section d'Or" seems to have been the challenge presented by the Italian Futurists during their show at Galerie Bernheim-Jeune that same year. Accused by the Italians of perpetuating the classical tradition rather than engaging the contemporary, the French artists organized the "Salon de la Section d'Or" in order to demonstrate their achievements. As an allusion to their theoretical interests, the artists chose an exhibition title referring to the geometrical proportion used in art and architecture since the Egyptians, even though Juan Gris was the only one of them to actually employ it in his work. A swan song of the prewar French avant-garde, the show opened with a late-night *vernissage* of a kind not seen in Paris since the first Salon d'Automne a decade before.

← Left to right: Brothers Marcel Duchamp, Jacques Villon, and Raymond Duchamp-Villon in the garden of Villon's studio in Puteaux, France, c. 1913–14. Many of the artists who participated in the "Salon de la Section d'Or," including these three, met weekly in the Paris suburbs to discuss wide-ranging topics related to the role of art in modern life. The idea for the show grew out of these meetings sometime around 1910; Jacques Villon most likely suggested the title.

→ Cover of *La Section d'Or*, no.1, 9 October 1912. This eight-page brochure, published by Imprimerie Clerex et Ricouchot and sold at the Galerie la Boétie, included a collection of five analytical essays written on the occasion of the exhibition: "Young Painters, Keep a Calm," by critic Guillaume Apollinaire (on the cover); "The Exhibition of La Section d'Or" by Maurice Raynal, an early writer on Cubism, discussing guiding principles behind the exhibition and works by several of the participants; "Impressionist Music" by Gabrielle Buffet, the film critic and wife of Francis Picabia; "To a Poor, Disgusted Man," by poet Pierre Reverdy; and "Press and Book Reviews" by Marc Brésil on reactions to Cubist works. (Selected translations, p. 135.)

Numéro Spécial consacré à l'Exposition de la "Section d'Or"

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LA SECTION D'OR

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Jeunes Peintres ne vous frappez pas !

Quelques jeunes gens, écrivains d'art, peintres, poètes, se groupèrent pour défendre leur idéal plastique, c'est l'idéal même.

Le titre qu'ils donnent à leur publication: la Section d'Or, indique assez qu'ils ne se croient pas inféodés à l'art et qu'ils se rattachent à la grande tradition, ils se doutent qu'elle n'est pas close de la plupart des écrivains d'art populaires de notre temps. C'est tant pis pour cet écrivains d'art.

Quelques-uns d'entre eux, pour donner du poids à leur sagesse, n'ont pas hésité à demander que leurs opinions extrêmement peu nouvelles pénètrent comme les artistes dont ils s'disent juges, leurs œuvres.

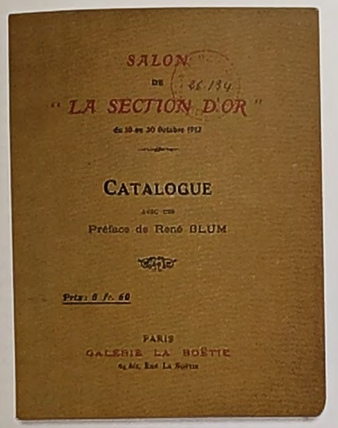
La passion aveugle ces pauvres gens. Pantomnaineur ces ne savent pas ce qu'ils disent. C'est au nom de la nature que l'on brûle d'accabler les peintres nouveaux.

On ne demandait ce que la nature peut avoir de commun avec les productions de cet art dégénéré que dévoue la clientèle de la rue Bonaparte ou avec les peintures des piètres héritiers des maîtres impressionnistes.

Bien plutôt reconnaissons à l'école de la nature les sévères investigations des jeunes maîtres qui, avec un courage admirable ont trouvé le mot burlesque avec lequel on croit vaincre les ridiculiser.

Les critiques, à quelque tendance qu'ils appartiennent, appartiennent à tous ceux qui ont souci de l'avenir de l'art—comme les artistes les plus sérieux et les plus intéressants de notre époque.

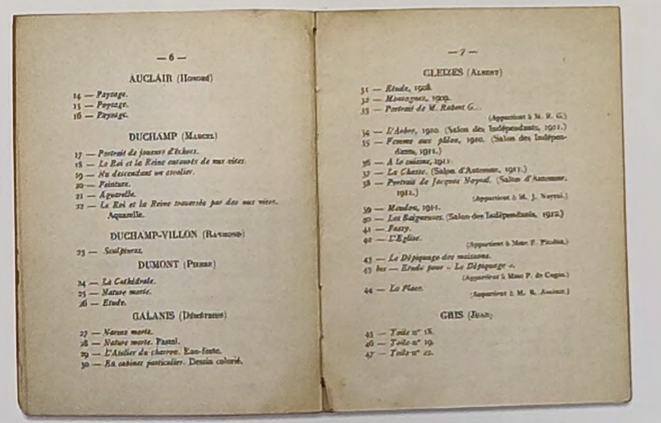
Il a cependant voulu montrer une vérité assez évidente en disant que si ces peintres n'ont point de talent, que si leur art est indigne d'être admiré, ceux qui font métier



↑ Cover of the catalog for the "Salon de la Section d'Or," with a preface by avant-garde choreographer René Blum, 1912. (Translation, p. 135.) The inside front cover announces weekly lectures by Guillaume Apollinaire, the art critic Maurice Raynal, and René Blum, presented during the run of the exhibition. The catalog lists 185 works by 31 artists.

↗ The catalog lists entries for six works by Marcel Duchamp, nos. 17–22, including no. 18, *The King and Queen Surrounded by Swift Nudes*, and no. 19, *Nude Descending a Staircase*. Works by Albert Gleizes, also one of the exhibition organizers, are listed as nos. 31–44. The one entry for Raymond Duchamp-Villon, no. 23, is identified merely as "sculptures."

→ The catalog entries for thirteen works by Francis Picabia consist of nos. 124–136, and by Félix Elie Tobeen, nos. 140–150.



— 6 —

AUCLAIR (Honoré)

14 — *Paysage.*
15 — *Paysage.*
16 — *Paysage.*

DUCHAMP (Marcel)

17 — *Portrait de joueurs d'échecs.*
18 — *Le Roi et la Reine entourés de nus vites.*
19 — *Nu descendant un escalier.*
20 — *Peinture.*
21 — *Aquarelle.*
22 — *Le Roi et la Reine traversés par des nus vites.* Aquarelle.

DUCHAMP-VILLON (Raymond)

23 — *Sculptures.*

DUMONT (Pierre)

24 — *La Cathédrale.*
25 — *Nature morte.*
26 — *Etude.*

GALANIS (Démétrius)

27 — *Nature morte.*
28 — *Nature morte.* Pastel.
29 — *L'Atelier du chevrier.* Eau-forte.
30 — *En cabinet particulier.* Dessin coloré.

— 7 —

GLEIZES (Albert)

31 — *Etude*, 1908.
32 — *Mensonges*, 1909.
33 — *Portrait de M. Robert G...*
(Appartient à M. R. G.)
34 — *L'Arbre*, 1910. (Salon des Indépendants, 1911.)
35 — *Femme aux pâles*, 1910. (Salon des Indépendants, 1911.)
36 — *A la cuisine*, 1911.
37 — *La Chasse.* (Salon d'Automne, 1911.)
38 — *Portrait de Jacques Nayral.* (Salon d'Automne, 1911.)
(Appartient à M. J. Nayral.)
39 — *Meudon*, 1911.
40 — *Les Baigneuses.* (Salon des Indépendants, 1912.)
41 — *Faury.*
42 — *L'Eglise.*
(Appartient à Mme F. Picabia.)
43 — *Le Déjeuner des voisines.*
43 bis — *Etude pour « Le Déjeuner ».*
(Appartient à Mme P. de Cugnac.)
44 — *La Place.*
(Appartient à M. R. Arnaud.)

GRIS (Juan)

45 — *Toile n° 18.*
46 — *Toile n° 19.*
47 — *Toile n° 20.*

— 12 —

PICABIA (Francis)

124 — *La Procession, Séville.*
125 — *Musique de procession.*
126 — *Figure triste.*
127 — *Promenade.*
128 — *Danses à la source.*
129 — *Paris.*
130 — *Ravin.*
131 — *Paysage.*
132 — *Paysage.*
133 — *Pelz de Cannes.*
134 — *Dans un port.*
135 — *Paysage.*
136 — *Souvenirs de musée.*

TIRVERT (Ernest)

137 — *Etude de Femme.*
138 — *Etude de Femme.*
139 — *La Bergère.*

TOBEEN

140 — *Les Pêcheurs.* (Salon des Indépendants, 1912.)
141 — *Les Faucheurs.*
142 — *Repos.*
143 — *Jeunesse.*
144 — *Composition.*
145 — *Lavoirs.*

— 13 —

146 — *Paysage basque.*
147 — *Etude, tête de femme.*
148 — *La Seine à Montet.*
149 — *Le Canal Saint-Denis.*
150 — *Dessins.*

VALENSI (Henry)

151 — *Rythme de la Sainte-Maxime*, 1912.
152 — *Rythme d'Athènes*, 1912.
153 — *Rythme de Constantinople*, 1912.
154 — *Le Vent dans les arbres*, 1912.
155 — *Rêves d'eau*, 1912.
156 — *Sur la marche funèbre de Chopin*, 1912.
157 — *Sur les feux d'eau de Kandi*, 1912.
158 — *L'Air marine des acieres de Long*, 1912.
159 — *Printemps*, 1912.
160 — *Rondo*, 1912.
161 — *Harmonie sur Sainte Foie* (Angleterre, 1912). (Salon des Indépendants, 1913.)

VÉRA (Paul)

162 — *Adam et Eve.* Dessus de porte.
163 — *Philosophie.* Dessus de porte.
164 — *Un cadre de dessins.* Paysage.
165 — *Un cadre de dessins.* Nus.

A selection of paintings from the "Salon de la Section d'Or":

←← Francis Picabia
The Procession, Seville
[La procession, Séville], 1912
Oil on canvas
48 × 48 in (121.9 × 121.9 cm)
Procession, Seville, one of 13 pieces submitted by Picabia, exemplifies the artist's approach to Cubism. The dour color scheme of blacks, whites, and grays is a recurring element in Analytic Cubism and in the other works of the "Salon de la Section d'Or." The bright orange of the figures' faces and the startling blues of the sky are found almost exclusively in works by Picabia.

← Marcel Duchamp
Nude Descending a Staircase (No. 2)
[Nu descendant un escalier (No. 2)], 1912
Oil on canvas
57¾ × 35¼ in (147 × 89.2 cm)
Several months prior to the "Salon de la Section d'Or," Duchamp submitted this work to the Salon des Indépendants, 1912. After fellow Cubists deemed it too similar to the work of rival Futurists, with its focus on the representation of speed and mechanics, Duchamp was persuaded to remove it. As a result, the "Salon de la Section d'Or" was one of the first public presentations of this highly controversial work.

←← Marcel Duchamp
The King and Queen Surrounded by Swift Nudes
[Le Roi et la reine entourés de nus vites], 1912
Oil on canvas
45¼ × 50¼ in (114.6 × 128.9 cm)
Duchamp's continuing fascination with movement and kineticism can be clearly seen in this canvas, which (along with his *Nude Descending a Staircase [No. 2]*) traveled to The Armory Show in New York in 1913. There, the works were hung in the Cubist room, which was labeled "the Chamber of Horrors" by unsympathetic critics and the press despite great interest from the public.

←← Juan Gris
The Washstand [Le lavabo], 1912
Oil, pasted paper, and glass on canvas
51¼ × 35 in (130 × 89 cm)
Gris incorporated pieces of real mirror into this work, using a collage technique that was employed by other Cubists such as Pablo Picasso and Georges Braque.

← Albert Gleizes
Harvest Threshing
[Le dépiquage des moissons], 1912
Oil on canvas
105¾ × 139 in (269 × 353 cm)
This monumental canvas demonstrates the self-taught artist's dramatic rejection of direct representation. Gleizes instead favored a more abstract style, reducing the landscape to geometric shapes, as seen in the hill-top house and village church (top left and right).

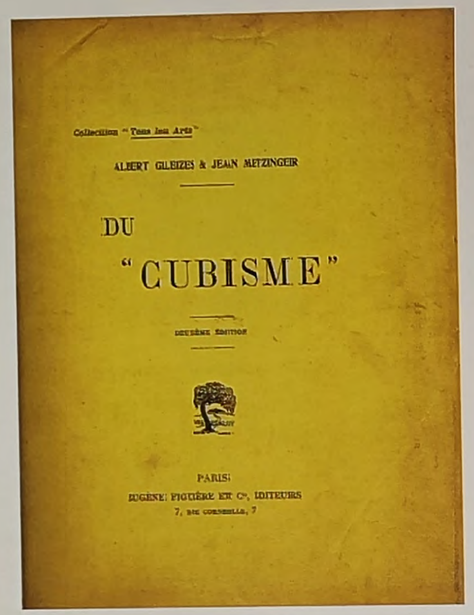
→ Albert Gleizes
Portrait of Jacques Nayral, 1911
Oil on canvas,
63⅜ × 44⅞ in (161.9 × 114 cm)
This portrait shows writer and poet (and the future brother-in-law of Gleizes) Jacques Nayral seated in the garden of Gleizes's house at Courbevoie. Gleizes melds the foreground and background into one plane, leaving little distinction between the sophisticated sitter and the abstracted landscape devoid of most recognizable imagery.

→ Francis Picabia
Dances at the Spring [Danses à la source], 1912
Oil on canvas
99¼ × 98 in (252 × 249 cm)
Picabia's unusually vivid colors appear again in *Dances at the Spring*. Here the artist has systematically reduced two dancing figures in a rural and rugged landscape to almost entirely abstracted forms of color, light, and shade.

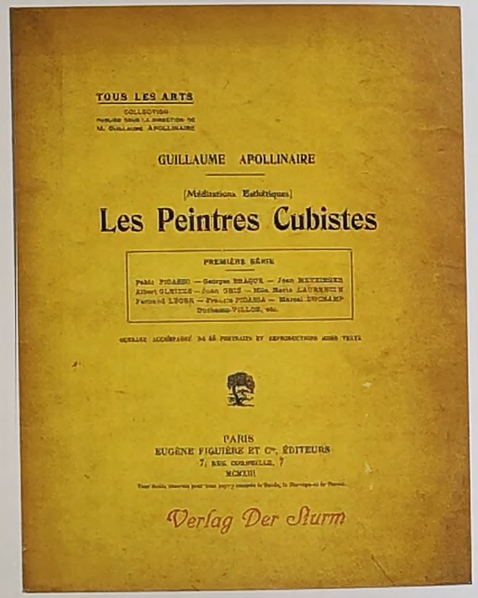
→→ Jean Metzinger
The Yellow Feather [La plume jaune], 1912
Oil on canvas
28¾ × 21¼in (73 × 53.9 cm)
Metzinger's depiction of a stylish woman, her hat bedecked with a bright yellow feather, exemplifies the Cubist approach to portraiture. The artist analyzes multiple facets of the face and reassembles them as if seen from several viewpoints.

→ Juan Gris
Man at the Café [L'homme au café], 1912
Oil on canvas
50¼ × 43⅛ in (127.6 × 88.3 cm)

→→ Juan Gris
The Watch [La montre], 1912
Oil and pasted paper on canvas
25¼ × 36¼ in (65 × 92 cm)



↑ Cover of *Du "Cubisme,"* by Albert Gleizes and Jean Metzinger, Paris, 1912. Although it was not an official publication of the "Salon de la Section d'Or," *Du "Cubisme"* was written by two of the participating artists and published to coincide with the exhibition. The book is a theoretical treatise on Cubism, but in placing quotation marks around this term, the authors call into question a singular definition of style. Together with *Méditations esthétiques: Les peintres cubistes* (at right), *Du "Cubisme"* was published by Eugène Figuière et Cie. as part of a series of books titled Tous les Arts. These are two of the first books that attempted to classify the Cubist movement, its tendencies, and its origins.



↑ Cover of *Méditations esthétiques: Les peintres cubistes*, by Guillaume Apollinaire, Paris, October 1913. This collection of Apollinaire's reviews and essays on nine painters became a key work of 20th-century art criticism. Much of this text had been previously published in article form in the magazine *Les Soirées de Paris*, which Apollinaire edited. Chapter 7 of *Méditations esthétiques* was based on a lecture he gave at the "Salon de la Section d'Or" and describes four categories of Cubism: Scientific, Physical, Orphic, and Instinctive. (Translation, p. 136.)

Salon de "La Section d'Or" [exh. cat.]

Preface

RENÉ BLUM

Paris, 1912

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The small group of artists exhibiting here also showed last year in a gallery where the lack of space was prejudicial to the works. This time, in a more advantageous, less cramped setting, their creations take on their full meaning, individually and collectively.

Whatever you may ultimately feel about this exhibition, you will find it difficult not to applaud the tenacity of young artists determinedly blazing their own trail, undeterred by obstacles and paying no heed to the mockery by a certain section of the public. With no shared penchants and no deep affinities, they are nonetheless driven by a single idea: to disengage art from its tradition, from its outworn associations—in short, to liberate it through a process of rigorous subordination to the personality of the artist.

So pause before these vividly colored canvases, gaze at these boldly formed busts, and just see if you can identify an influence. All shackles cast off, all diktats rejected, the exhibitors are beholden only to themselves, drawing their knowledge and inspiration from their own sensibilities.

You will find no variants on a particular school here. You will notice only differences of sensibility. But it must be said that in the case of our artists a new element has been added to this sensibility: an imagination that makes possible limitless variety, leaves room for all art's powers, is conducive to the boldest blendings and the most unexpected collisions, and engenders a harmony almost always founded in contrast.

This combining of forces means Impressionism has been transcended. Monet's maxim no longer suffices. The painter is no longer concerned solely with a moment or a color: his intellect can provide him with countless visions of nuance and form. Nature is now no more than his starting point.

Some of these innovators are converts to the same technique, but this is not our subject here, nor is it what really requires our attention; technique is not the chief interest of an art whose most significant feature lies in personal affirmation.

This remains a novel concept, and while their efforts are earning them steadily increasing acceptance, our artists are still faced with a recalcitrant, sometimes hostile public. If they have not yet succeeded in winning their case or reaping the direct benefits of their program, at least they have shown the way and may prove to be the true agents of artistic regeneration.

"Jeunes Peintres ne Vous Frappez Pas!"

GUILLAUME APOLLINAIRE

La Section d'Or, no. 1 — Paris, 9 October 1912

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Several young men—writers on art, painters, poets—have united to defend their plastic ideal, and that is ideal.

The title they have chosen for their publication, the *Section d'Or*, itself indicates sufficiently that they do not consider themselves isolated in art, and that they are linked to the great tradition. It so happens that the great tradition is not the tradition espoused by most of the popular art critics of our time. That is too bad for the art critics.

Some of these gentlemen, in order to add weight to their flightiness, have not hesitated to propose that their opinions be reinforced by penal sanctions against the artists whose works they dislike.

These poor people are blinded by passion. Let us forgive them, for they know not what they say. It is in the name of nature that they are trying to crush the new painters.

One wonders what nature can possibly have in common with the productions of the degenerate art that is defended by the citadel on the rue Bonaparte or with the paintings of the mediocre heirs of the impressionist masters.

It is not they who will bring us back to the study of nature but rather the strict investigations of the young masters who, with admirable courage, have taken as their own the burlesque name with which people tried to ridicule them.

The cubists, whatever individual tendency they belong to, are considered by all those who are concerned about the future of art to be the most serious and most interesting artists of the time.

And to those who would seek to deny a truth so manifest, we reply simply that if these painters have no talent and if their art deserves no admiration, then those whose job it is to guide the taste of the public should not talk about them.

Why so much anger, honored censors?

The cubists don't interest you?

Then don't be interested in them. But instead, we have indignant cries, gnashing of teeth, and appeals to the government.

Such a venomous spirit in our art critics, such violence, such lamentations, all prove the vitality of the new painters; their works will be admired for centuries to come, while the wretched detractors of contemporary French art will soon be forgotten.

We must not forget that people fired at Victor Hugo. His glory was not diminished by that fact. On the contrary.

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"Young Painters, Keep Calm!" in Guillaume Apollinaire, Apollinaire on Art: Essays and Reviews, 1902–1918, *ed. LeRoy C. Breunig (New York: Viking Press, 1972), 252–53. Translation by Susan Suleiman.*

"L'Exposition de la Section d'Or" [excerpt]

MAURICE RAYNAL

La Section d'Or, no.1 — Paris, 9 October 1912

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What will prove to have been the main point about the *Section d'Or* exhibition is that it has grouped together, for the first time with such completeness, all those artists who have ushered in the twentieth century with works clearly representative of the tastes, tendencies and ideas that will be more characteristic of it than any others. Up to 1910, only those who initiated the movement, in different ways which we shall discuss elsewhere, P. Picasso, J. Metzinger and G. Braque, had given life to the term "cubism." But since then the growing number of artists who have followed them and have brought such fresh contributions to the quest for truth, who have displayed so much courage in face of the inevitable attacks of the critics, and who have recently caused so complete a disarray among those judges who would now gladly refer to the superannuated pronouncements of their predecessors as drivel (when really the poor devils think exactly as they did)—this growing number has become so considerable and confident as to make it today appear very difficult to group all its representatives under one special label. The difference between Metzinger and Picasso is as clear-cut as that which separates Renoir from Cézanne—to whom indeed they are comparable in their temperaments and some of their gifts. And again, there is such a difference

between men like Fernand Léger and Marcel Duchamp, between Picabia and La Fresnaye, or A. Gleizes and Juan Gris, that, just as no one would think of treating Renoir and Cézanne as impressionists, the term "cubism" is day by day losing its significance, if it ever had any very definite one. "There were ten of them a year ago, there are fifty this year," is the phrase used the other day, in one of the big dailies, by a champagne broker who, with impeccable salesmanship, cushions his venerable bottles of wine (far more praiseworthy than himself, of course) with little diatribes against every artistic effort that he thinks (or at least has been told) is determined to keep clear of grubby commercialism. Well! for once the fellow was right. So much so, that the development achieved by this movement in a short time has been considerable enough to persuade its adepts that they should unite their efforts in this exhibition, in spite of the brokers, whatever side they are on, in spite of the persons who love novelty only on condition that it resembles the old, and in spite of those fools of whom La Rochefoucauld says that, even though they may be endowed with wit, they are incapable of honest judgement.

Again, this exhibition seems to me complete in that it offers an infinitely varied range of temperaments. It contains realistic and sensuous painters; idealists and intellectuals; impulsive ones and thoughtful ones, wise men who, according to the Greek philosopher's prescription, season their wisdom with a grain of madness, along with madmen who temper their madness with a little wisdom.

In a word, one encounters there a rich flowering of diverse personalities such as is to be found in every artistic period of any importance.

I shall not recapitulate here the principles of the only kind of painting worthy of the name, principles which these brilliant minds have codified. What finer idea can there be than this conception of a *pure* painting, which shall in consequences be neither descriptive, nor anecdotal, nor psychological, nor moral, nor sentimental, nor educational, nor (lastly) decorative? I am not saying that these latter ways of understanding painting are negligible, but it is incontestable that they are hopelessly inferior. Painting, in fact, must be nothing but an art derived from a disinterested study of forms: that is, free from any of the ulterior purposes I have just mentioned.

Can there be a more noble elevation of thought, or a more frank refusal to please the ignorant strollers round those great fairs of painting which are harboured yearly in market halls or baleful Avenues (whether Alexandre III or d'Antin)?

What is there to say of this rich flowering of new ideas, always very firmly based on the best and purest precepts of the ancients; this love of science, which is a criterion of our modern sensibility in all its refinement; this urge to weigh and measure everything properly, and to leave nothing to vague and absurd inspiration; this absolute desire to paint a picture otherwise than while holding the little naked model with one hand and thinking how much one can sell the picture for with the other (this must actually be quite difficult)? What, in short, is there to say about these noble efforts, except to express the enthusiasm they inspire?

Who will fail to be astonished by this marvellous idea, taken up afresh from the Primitives after the stuffed shirts of the Renaissance had forgotten it, the idea of painting conception instead of painting vision? One needs only to have been very casually loved by the Gods (and cared for by one's mother) in order to get some inkling of the brilliant results that can be occasioned by this very strange and pure principle of painting things as one thinks them, not as the short-sighted eye of the above-mentioned broker ('in I now forget what commodity) supposes it sees them!

How can one fail to praise this categorical rejection of such old-maidish child's-play as horizontal composition, observance of perspective, *trompe-l'œil*, foreshortening and other petty tricks of the trade, worthy of some Rue Lépine competition or of a show at the Châtelet?

And, above all, this incorruptible love of stubborn research. Almost never satisfied with themselves, discontented with their works as soon as these are done, one can feel that the authors of these pictures do not wait to finish a painting before setting themselves fresh problems, and that they only relax from a solved question in seeking to elucidate a new one.

To them every novelty immediately becomes an occasion for finding out about it, for discussing it, for drawing profitable lessons from it, with the purpose of refining their sensibility still further. They certainly are not of those who think that no art is possible in our age; on the contrary they are living in intimate contact with the age and acting as its sentinels. . . .

Juan Gris has here made a considerable effort. He is certainly the fiercest of the purists in the group. To establish firmly that the sheer study of forms is his only concern, he numbers his pictures instead of giving them titles. The canvas representing a dressing-table complete with its accessories will attract attention. To show clearly that in his conception of pure painting there exist objects that are absolutely antipictorial, he has not hesitated to stick several real objects on to the canvas. Plane surfaces cannot, in fact, be painted, since they are not bodies; if one does so, one falls back into imitation or into the preoccupation with skill which is the preserve of the painters of shop signs. If I think of a bottle and wish to render it as it is, the label on it appears to me simply as an unimportant accessory which I might leave out, for it is only an image. If I feel I must show it, I could copy it exactly, but that is a useless labour; so I place the actual label on the picture—but not until I have cut it out to fit the form I have given to the bottle; this is the nicety which will determine the charm of the idea. Juan Gris has applied the same principle to the mirror he has placed on his canvas. This has caused much discussion, but it can be said that it does no harm to the picture and that it pinpoints the strange originality of Juan Gris's imagination.

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"The Section d'Or Exhibition," in Edward F. Fry, Cubism *(London: Thames and Hudson, 1966), 97–100. Translation by Jonathan Griffin.*

Chapter VII

GUILLAUME APOLLINAIRE

Méditations Esthétiques: Les Peintres Cubistes

Paris, 1912

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Cubism differs from the old schools of painting in that it is not an art of imitation, but an art of conception which tends towards creation.

In representing conceptualized reality or creative reality, the painter can give the effect of three dimensions. He can to a certain extent cube. But not by simply rendering reality as seen, unless he indulges in *trompe-l'œil*, in foreshortening, or in perspective, thus distorting the quality of the forms conceived or created.

I can discriminate four tendencies in cubism. Of these, two are parallel and pure.

Scientific cubism is one of the pure tendencies. It is the art of painting new structures out of elements borrowed not from the reality of sight, but from the reality of insight. All men have a sense of this interior reality. A man does not have to be cultivated in order to conceive, for example, of a round form.

The geometrical aspect, which made such an impression on those who saw the first canvases of the scientific cubists, came from the fact that the essential reality was rendered with great purity, while visual accidents and anecdotes had been eliminated. The painters who follow this tendency are: Picasso, Georges Braque, Albert Gleizes, Marie Laurencin and Juan Gris.

Physical cubism is the art of painting new structures with elements borrowed, for the most part, from visual reality. This art, however, belongs in the cubist movement because of its constructive discipline. It has a great future as historical painting. Its social role is very clear, but it is not a pure art. It confuses what is properly the subject with images. The painter-physicist who created this trend is Le Fauconnier.

Orphic cubism is the other important trend of the new school. It is the art of painting new structures with elements which have not been borrowed from the visual sphere, but have been created entirely by the artist himself, and been endowed by him with fullness of reality. The works of the orphic artist must simultaneously give a pure aesthetic pleasure; a structure which is self-evident; and a sublime meaning, that is, a subject. This is pure art. The light in Picasso's paintings is based on this conception, which Robert Delaunay is also in the process of discovering and towards which Fernand Léger, Francis Picabia, and Marcel Duchamp are also directing their energies.

Instinctive cubism is the art of painting new structures with elements which are not borrowed from visual reality, but are suggested to the artist by instinct and intuition; it has long tended towards orphism. The instinctive artist lacks lucidity and an aesthetic doctrine; instinctive cubism includes a large number of artists. Born of French impressionism, this movement has now spread all over Europe.

Cézanne's last paintings and his watercolours belong to cubism, but Courbet is the father of the new painters; and André Derain, whom I propose to discuss some other time, was the eldest of his beloved sons, for we find him at the beginning of the fauvist movement, which was a kind of introduction to cubism, and also at the beginning of this great subjective movement; but it would be too difficult today to write discerningly of a man who so willfully stands apart from everyone and everything.

The modern school of painting seems to me the most audacious that has ever appeared. It has posed the question of what is beautiful in itself.

It wants to visualize beauty disengaged from whatever charm man has for man, and until now, no European artist has dared attempt this. The new artists demand an ideal beauty, which will be, not merely the proud expression of the species, but the expression of the universe, in so far as it has been humanized by light.

The new art clothes its creations with a magnificence which surpasses anything else conceived by the artists of our time. Ardent in its search for beauty, it is noble and energetic, and the reality it brings us is marvelously clear. I love the art of today because above all else I love the light; for man loves the light more than anything; it was he who invented fire.

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Originally published as "Les peintres cubistes." From Edward F. Fry, Cubism *(London: Thames and Hudson, 1966), 116–18. Translation by Jonathan Griffin.*

"Un Vernissage Cubiste" [excerpt]

ANDRÉ TOURETTE

Gil Blas — Paris, 10 October 1912

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Last night the Cubists fought their first pitched battle. In response to their salvo of invitations there was a prodigious crush in the vast gallery on rue la Boétie.

Even Monsieur Lampué would have to admit that the *Section d'Or* painters were on their home ground here.

This is a unique exhibition, far outstripping the first Salon d'Automne and its pioneering of electric lighting. Present at the opening were women from the smart set, collectors, painters of all imaginable persuasions, the Cubists' friends and their natural enemies, the Gentleman who will never understand and the Lady bent on understanding at all costs. . . .

There were discussions, heated exchanges, quarrels, and irrevocable fallings-out. No scandal has ever excited such passion or such mutual antagonism. Yesterday on rue la Boétie twenty-year friendships were destroyed by love of Metzinger or hatred of Picabia.

The press reports for 9 October will make extremely amusing reading ten years from now, but let's not wait until then to delve into a mixed bag of notes.

"The preface is by René Blum, a shrewd critic. He wouldn't mislead us just for the fun of it."

"Even so, it's very ugly."

"Well, *I* think it's sublime."

"Bah! It's no better or worse than other exhibitions."

But here's something worth noting. In a group of Parisians that includes André Mare, Roger Allard, Miss Marie Laurencin and André Groult in a parma violet overcoat, a connoisseur declares:

"What makes me want to stick up for the Cubists is the scorn heaped on them by people who can't see what they're getting at and are total foreigners to the art of painting. On the basis of some tiny little feeling, someone whose ignorance of music would never allow him to pass judgment on Debussy or Ravel, simply dismisses Albert Gleizes—or André Lhote, who's hardly a Cubist at all."

"Absolutely right!" comes the reply. "And let me tell you, the Cubists are doing art a lot of good, because their shenanigans keep people with no interest in art away from the Salons."

Not far away—and God knows why—a well-known collector is trailing after a prominent dealer whose absurdly antiquated stock is famed from Moscow to Philadelphia. But the great dealer remains immune to his advances.

A less discreet gentleman wearing his medal from 1870 is getting worked up:

"That's exactly it! I was refused a place in the exhibition and I'm proud of it!"

The old chap's genuine distress is painful to see. His granddaughter whispers to him, "Come on, Grandpa, don't get upset."

And the bemedaled painter makes for the door, muttering, "A rabble, a rabble!"

In general, though, things are going swimmingly. No real fuss, even if there are little squabbles everywhere: when an exquisite young woman ventures, "The great geniuses have never been understood!" she is sternly put in her place by her husband's "Oh, Margaret, that's quite enough now."

I noted that the women were the most respon-

save to grace of line, accomplished use of color—by Metzinger, for example—and the colors themselves. Perhaps their minds were on more trivial matters—was all this artistic austerity only prompting ideas for hats?—but they behaved nicely, appearing both troubled and sensitive to the fact that the general hostility rendered such striving heroic. The men, on the other hand, provided the biggest contingent of scoffers; and even if the criticisms—harsh, cruel, but justified by the urge to disagree—remain deserving of respect, at a painting salon, just as at the theater, we must beware of the man who laughs.

"Les Arts: Cubistes" [excerpt]
LOUIS VAUXCELLES
Gil Blas — Paris, 14 October 1912
—

I hesitate to bring up the subject of the Cubists again, it being a fool's game to encourage their indecent hunger for publicity. Silence would no doubt be the better tactic, with oblivion to follow.

When one thinks of the pained distance of a van Gogh, or the isolation of a Degas or a Pissarro, and then one witnesses the frantic pushiness of these ignoramuses, one cannot help feeling a certain distaste.

If only they had some talent! But for three years now they've been bumbling around with theories nothing ewer emerges from—as if anything could. . . .

These "poor" Cubists have a spacious gallery at their disposal on rue de la Boétie. They have a newspaper, and various exponents of the ironic approach among their sycophants.

Leafing through their newspaper, in which I am liberally plied with abuse—a fact that would not prevent my recognizing their virtues, if they had any—I find an eruption of hyperbole, feeble insults, and errors of fact.

One extremely nice chap, Mr. Raynal, writes that painting must not be—among other things—decorative or psychological, but "pure."

But what is a portrait from which *psychology* is excluded? What is a landscape that eschews the *decorative*? . . .

Guillaume Apollinaire, whom I met at the "Section d'Or," where he explains the party line—unless that's Mr. Allard's job, it's hard to keep track—provided me with further explanations regarding these bits of glass.

"The artist," I was told by the author of *Hersiarch & Co.*, "wasn't able to copy the gleam of the bits of mirror, so he added the actual fragments to his canvas."

To which I replied, "But if your friend had wanted to paint a *Sunbeam* and wasn't able to recreate the light effect, what would he have done?"

At the Section d'Or there is one painting I recommend, called *The King and Queen Surrounded by Swift Nudes* [Le roi et la reine traversés par des nus en vitesse].

That overblown title fits perfectly the painting to which it is appended.

But then, we mustn't attack each other.

"La Semaine Artistique: Les Expositions"
OLIVIER HOURCADE
Paris-Journal — 15 October 1912
—

Frankly I can think of no more entertaining adventure for the unbiased critic than a stroll through the Salon de la Boétie, at the Georges Petit Gallery.

Just when they seemed utterly defeated by public opprobrium, the most serious of the Salon d'Automne swashbucklers have gutsily assembled at the "Section d'Or" gallery. And we now see their early supporters joined by *Le Journal*, which hails them, and *Le Temps*, which at least accords them respect.

Nonetheless, these young painters must not cry victory prematurely. Just as Mallarmé, Claudel and Maeterlinck are obstinately disparaged by people who do not understand their idiom, these artists will continue to be disparaged by those who do not grasp their message. This utterly senseless excuse for pushing criticism of them beyond the limits is what the "Cubists" have set out to demolish. Here they offer several years' worth of canvases, irrefutable proof of their talent and logical development and a fine résumé of the strivings of a varied, gifted, knowledgeable and studious group of artists. There is not one of them whose work resembles that of his neighbor. *Indeed, do they actually have a single principle in common?* Apart, that is, from shedding the phony vision of "schools" with which we have been so absorbed that for some the notion of feeling, seeing and thinking differently from the Romantic and Impressionist masters—even of having a goal other than that of the Goyas, Ingres, Corots, Manets and Cézannes we so piously admire—is inconceivable, ridiculous.

Abruptly confronted with these works, those who—like the affable policeman I interviewed on opening day—have not undergone a warped art education, are completely won over by the aura of robust talent that emanates from the exhibition.

The pervasive, extremely French grace of *Metzinger*, the naturalistic force of *Gleizes*, the serene power of *Léger*, the picturesque savor of *Tobeen*, the compositional solidity of *Dumont*, the Slavic voluptuousness of *Archipenko*, the profound, new skill of *Agero*, who successfully draws on the masters of both Negro and Greek art, the rigorist sincerity of *Juan Gris*, who numbers his pictures the way the great composers do their symphonies, the perhaps over-sophisticated talent of *Marcel Duchamp*, the Byzantine originality of *Valensi*, the dreamlike realism of *Le Beau*, the delicacy of feeling of *Luc-Albert Moreau*, the deliciously aristocratic charm of our great *Marie Laurencin*, the beautifully caught atmosphere of *La Fresnaye*, the exquisitely rare distinction of *Jacques Villon*, the lofty purity and ever-responsive soul of *André Lhote*, the unquiet existence of the principled *Jean Marchand*, the conscientious, interesting endeavors of *Paul Véra*, the extraordinary acuity of vision of *Louis Marcoussis*, the "likeability in spite of everything" of *Ribemont-Dessaignes*, the refined rusticity of *de Segonzac* and the emotional intensity of *Picabia* all bloom unhampered in this Salon, together with credible works from *Alexandra Exter*, *Ernest Wield*, *Tivoert*, *André Mare*, *Madame Lewiska*, *Madame Hassenberg*, *Honoré Auclair* and *Galanis*.

This is pure art. "Nature," as René Blum has so accurately put it, "is now no more than art's starting point."

10

Erster Deutscher Herbstsalon
The First German Autumn Salon

Berlin, 1913

LOCATION AND DATES
Galerie Der Sturm, temporarily relocated to Potsdamerstrasse 75, Berlin, 20 September–1 December 1913

CURATOR
Herwarth Walden

ITINERARY
None

ARTISTS
Egon Adler, Alexander Archipenko, Hans Arp, Giacomo Balla, Fritz Baumann, Willi Baumeister, Wladimir von Bechtejeff, Vincenc Beneš, Albert Bloch, Umberto Boccioni, Hanns Bolz, Patrick Henry Bruce, David Burliuk, Vladimir Burliuk, Heinrich Campendonk, Carlo Carrà, Marc Chagall, Robert Delaunay, Sonia Delaunay-Terk, Heinrich Ehmsen, Elisabeth Epstein, Max Ernst, Lyonel Feininger, Emil Filla, Leo Gestel, Ugo Giannattasio, Albert Gleizes, Josef Gočár, Natalia Goncharova, Otto Gutfreund, Marsden Hartley, Jacoba van Heemskerck, Walter Helbig, Franz Henseler, Hermann Huber, Pavel Janák, Alexej Jawlensky, Wassily Kandinsky, Paul Klee, Oskar Kokoschka, Josef Kölschbach, Adriaan Korteweg, Alfred Kubin, Otakar Kubin, Nikolai Kul'bin, Reinhold Kündig, Mikhail Larionov, Fernand Léger, Alfred Loeb, August Macke, Helmuth Macke, Franz Marc, Louis Marcoussis, Alberto Mazzei, Gordon M. McCouch, Carlo Mense, Jean Metzinger, Alexander Mogilewsky, Louis Moilliet, Piet Mondrian, Gabriele Münter, Julio Ortiz de Zárate, Francis Picabia, Albert A. Plasschaert, Antonín Procházka, Otto van Rees, Adriana van Rees-Dutilh, Henri Rousseau, Luigi Russolo, Lodewijk Schelfhout, Paul Adolf Seehaus, Richard Seewald, Gino Severini, Jan Sluijters, Ardengo Soffici, Ernst Sonderegger, Amadeo de Souza-Cardoso,

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OLIVIER
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Jacob Steinhardt, Curt Störmer, Stanislas Stückgold, Charles de Tholley, Hans Thuar, Marianne von Werefkin, Erich Wichman, Georgiy Yakulov. Other exhibits: works by peasant painter Pavel Kovalenko and by the Court Painter of the Maharaja of Udaipur; contemporary Turkish painting; Japanese images on rice paper; and Chinese images on rice paper.

EXHIBITION CATALOG
Erster Deutscher Herbstsalon. Introduction by Herwarth Walden, foreword signed by "The Exhibitors." Berlin: Verlag Der Sturm, 1913.

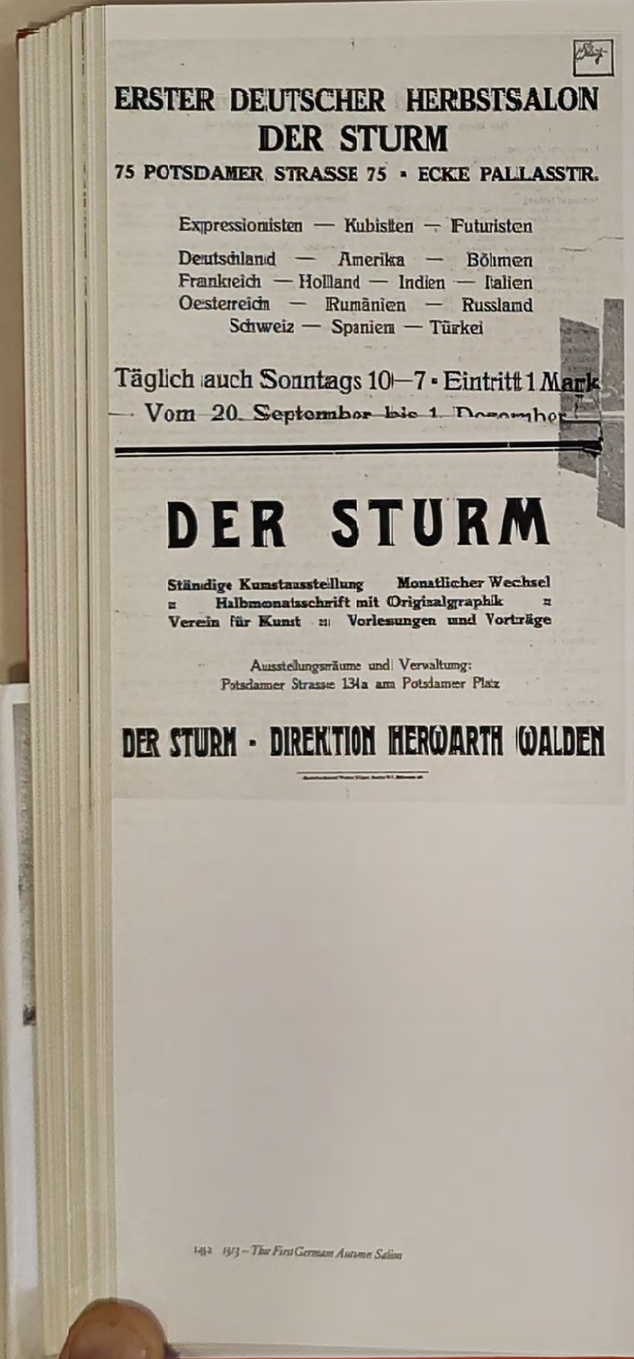
RELATED PUBLICATIONS
Der Sturm, nos. 180/181 and 182/183. Essays by Herwarth Walden and others, October 1913.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
Number of artists: c. 85
Number of works: c. 366
Total attendance: unknown

The last great international exhibition of advanced art in Germany before World War I, "The First German Autumn Salon" signals the importance of collaboration between artists and impresarios in mounting critical shows of the avant-garde. A split within the Berlin Secession had stymied plans to present an exhibition in the fall of 1913 based on the Parisian Salon d'Automne. Seeking to thwart the efforts of the Berlin dealer Paul Cassirer to organize a replacement show, the avant-garde promoter Herwarth Walden collaborated with Blaue Reiter artists to assemble work for an exhibition to open that September. With financial backing from the collector and Blaue Reiter patron Bernhard Koehler, the exhibition took place in a space rented for the purpose under the auspices of Walden's magazine and gallery enterprise, *Der Sturm* (The Storm).

The artist Franz Marc had been disappointed by the large international show mounted in 1912 by the important artists' exhibition association, the Cologne Sonderbund. Believing that it would have been better if more advanced artists had played a greater role in its organization, he eagerly participated in Walden's project. Marc, August Macke, and Paul Klee helped select the artists, but Walden himself did most of the work—traveling in haste to procure pieces from throughout Europe, telling participants how much space they would have, and allowing them to select their own works. The nineteen sections of the ambitious exhibition were hung by Walden, Marc, Macke, and Koehler.

The influence of the Blaue Reiter was apparent not only in the widespread representation of the group's painters in the Autumn Salon, but also in a historical display devoted to Henri Rousseau, who also had been highlighted at their Munich debut. Walden was frustrated that Pablo Picasso would not participate, but the French Salon Cubists—especially Robert Delaunay, along with Italian Futurists, whom Walden had exhibited in 1912—made strong showings. The exhibition itself generated much controversy in the press and was a financial failure; Walden's hope of touring the Autumn Salon did not materialize. But he went on to send other exhibitions of the prewar avant-garde to London, Helsinki, Geneva, and Tokyo, as well as to large and small cities throughout Germany.



ERSTER DEUTSCHER HERBSTSALON
DER STURM
75 POTSDAMER STRASSE 75 ▪ ECKE PALLASSTR.

Expressionisten — Kubisten — Futuristen

Deutschland — Amerika — Böhmen
Frankreich — Holland — Indien — Italien
Oesterreich — Rumänien — Russland
Schweiz — Spanien — Türkei

Täglich auch Sonntags 10—7 ▪ Eintritt 1 Mark
Vom 20. September bis 1. Dezember

DER STURM

Ständige Kunstausstellung Monatlicher Wechsel
Halbmonatsschrift mit Originalgraphik
Verein für Kunst Vorlesungen und Vorträge

Ausstellungsräume und Verwaltung:
Potsdamer Strasse 134a am Potsdamer Platz

DER STURM · DIREKTION HERWARTH WALDEN

← Front of double-sided poster for "The First German Autumn Salon." This side of the poster includes practical information such as the address of Der Sturm's temporary gallery, the opening hours (daily from 10 to 7), and the admission fee of one mark. The poster underscores the international scope of the artists in the exhibition by listing the numerous countries of origin: Germany, America, Bohemia (today the western and central portions of the Czech Republic), France, Holland, India, Italy, Austria, Romania, Russia, Switzerland, Spain, and Turkey. It also lists the movements featured in the exhibition: Expressionism, Cubism, and Futurism. The bottom half of the poster is a general advertisement for Galerie Der Sturm, owned by the exhibition's organizer, Herwarth Walden.

↓ Back of double-sided poster. Walden compiled a selection of excerpts of exhibition reviews published in various newspapers and journals. Printed under the title "The gentlemen are not quite in agreement: The value of art criticism, or a confrontation," the reviews reflect a range of reactions to the Autumn Salon, many of them negative. A similar version of this selection was printed as "The Press and the Autumn Salon: A Confrontation" [Die Presse und der Herbstsalon: Eine Gegenüberstellung] in the October 1913 issue (no. 182/183) of Walden's publication *Der Sturm*. (Translation, p. 147.) In an article in that issue, Walden wrote: "With the review of 'The First German Autumn Salon,' the renowned art critics have executed themselves. . . . Their yelling and scolding has now come to an end."

Die Herren sind sich nicht ganz einig:

Der Wert der Kunstkritik oder eine Gegenübersetzung

Frankfurter Zeitung
Es wird die Vorstellung erweckt, als ob es in dieser Ausstellung etwas zu sehen gäbe in den Entwicklungsmöglichkeiten. Nie war eine Prätension anmassender, nie weniger begründet.

National-Zeitung
Es ist heute keine Frage mehr, dass die Kräfte, die hier an (der Arbeit sind, bestimmt sind, Anregungen und Auseinandersetzungen für die Wege zu geben, die die Kunst der Zukunft einst gehen wird.

Casseler Allgemeine Zeitung (Herr Robert Breuer)
Ernsthafte Leute werden mit dieser Ausstellung sehr schnell fertig sein; es gibt da gar kein Problem, es gibt nur Bedauern und Lachen.

Herr Fritz Stahl
Gegen die Zumutung, diese Fatzkereien als Kunst auch nur negativ zu behandeln, gibt es keinen ernsten Protest mehr. Wir lachen.

Vorwärts (Wieder Herr Robert Breuer)
Man braucht nur die Titel all dieser tollwütigen Pinselein zu lesen, um zu wissen, dass es sich hier wirklich nicht um Malerei, sondern um Kaffeehausliteratur handelt.

Deutsche Tageszeitung
Thren aber sind die Talentlosen in Reihe und Glied aufgestellt.

Berliner Tageblatt
Man sieht, es lohnt nicht den Besuch.

Vossische Zeitung
Nun, dachte ich, kann niemand mehr in 35 Minuten ein buntfarbiges Bild schaffen, noch Werke von der Tiefe eines Delaunay in einer Salon-Umschau nachmachen.

Herr Fritz Stahl über Kandinsky 1912
Der Rausch bleibt rein optisch und wird im Vergleich mit dekorativen Arrangements durch die Gewaltsamkeit der willkürlichen Linien, überdies grautönig. In dieser Wirkung steht aber der Aufwand eines grossen Bildes in lächerlichem Kontrast. Das kann man auf einem Lippchen Papier erreichen.

Leipziger Tageblatt
Chagall verfügt über eine Glut der Farbe und einen Schwung der Phantasie, die mitreissen, selbst wenn man sich ungegen solchen Schwärmereien hingibt.

B. Z. am Mittag
Die Tierbilder von Franz Marc geben einen Schein weiter zu leidenschaftlichen Kompositionen, die Phantastisches mit grossem Griff erblicken.

Berliner Börsencourier
Alfred Kubin macht seine dämonisch-metaphysischen Zeichnungen ohne jeden Nachdruck.

Berliner Börsencourier
Plötzlich sieht man ein paar indische und japanische Bilder, die alle Futuristen beschämen.

Leipziger Tageblatt
Paul Klee zeigt Zeichnungen, die sich in dem Tiefsinn der Kinderzeichnungen geschult haben.

Berliner Allgemeine Zeitung
Rousseau, aus dessen bis ins Kindliche vereinfachter Manier eine leise ironische Verfeinerung spricht.

Dresdener Neueste Nachrichten
Der Tag, an dem der erste deutsche Herbstsalon eröffnet wurde, darf als historisches Datum gelten. Es hat etwas Ueberwältigendes, allüberall Kämpfer und Vertreter der neuen Prinzipien am Werke zu sehen.

Hamburger Nachrichten
Es ist in der Tat grober Unfug, diese Unsumme von Lächerlichkeiten, von blöden Schmierereien . . . Man glaubt sich der Gemäldegalerie eines Irrenhauses zu nähern.

Vorwärts (Derselbe Herr Robert Breuer)
Es ist eine Kunst der Existenz . . . Es wäre demnach eine schwere Beleidigung, sie, wie das Muser-Grüe tut, für toll und dilettantisch zu erklären.

National-Zeitung
Daher sei man vorsichtig, eine man neue Kunstformen verurteilt, oder gar bespöttelt, wie es vielfach leider Sitte ist.

Hamburger Nachrichten
Weiter heisst es „Komposition" . . . Dann wieder Kontraste oder „Mystisches Bild" oder „Improvisation", zuweilen auch bloss Bild 1, Bild 2, Bild 3. Man spürt, wie schwer es den Malern geworden ist, ihren Bildern Bezeichnungen zu geben.

Volkszeitung
Täuschungen sind ausgeschlossen. Diese „Jüngsten" sind keine Revolutionäre; gereift und abgeklärt, aber reich-

Volkszeitung
. . . Ausstellung ist das weitaus Interessanteste, was man in der letzten Zeit an Kunstausstellungen sehen konnte.

Vorwärts (immer wieder Herr Robert Breuer)
Oder Herr Delaunay. Er zeigt uns die Sonne in vier verschiedenen Fassungen. Aber was er gibt, sind Schützenscheibenbilder, wie trunkene Dorfburschen sie fabrizieren.

Herr Fritz Stahl über Kandinsky 1913
Ich empfinde bei dem Anblick solchen Bildstückers (von Kandinsky) einen so anregenden und befreienden Genuss, dass es mir genug als Kunstwerk wäre . . . Er (Kandinsky) ist ein Genie der Farbe.

Vossische Zeitung
. . . wo solche Scherze zu sehen waren, wie Marc Chagalls einer schönen alten Miniatur schlecht nachgebildetes Kreuzigungsbild.

Hamburger Nachrichten
. . . ebenso unverständlich wie . . . die apokalyptischen Wölfe von Franz Marc.

Berliner Lokalanzeiger
Alfred Kubin, jenem bekannten Diabolker, der zu einer immer verfeinerten Form gelangt.

Leipziger Tageblatt
Bedauerlich sind dagegen die Proben der indischen und chinesischen Malerei, die man hier sieht.

Berliner Börsencourier
Paul Klee ist derjenige, der das Gerücht von den Max- und Moritz-Zeichnungen verursacht hat.

Casseler Allgemeine Zeitung (Schon wieder Herr Robert Breuer)
Rousseau, ein harmloser ehrlicher Dilettant.

Horde farbespritzender Brüllaffen

Neue Wahnsinns uniformen

Hottentotten im Oberhemd

↑ On another double-sided poster for the Autumn Salon, Walden responded to criticism of the show. The front of the poster reproduces three descriptive phrases of the artists from a review of the exhibition by Robert Breuer, an art critic for *Cassler Allgemeine Zeitung* and *Vorwärts*: "Hordes of color-spraying howler monkeys," "The new uniforms of insanity," and "Hottentots in dress shirts."

Nicht das Publikum ist die Herde: die Kunstkritik ist es.

Kunstkritiker besichtigen vierhundert Gemälde in vierzig Minuten: dann schreiben sie.

Kunstausstellungen müssen gegen den Willen der Kritiker besucht werden.

Kunst ist Gabe und nicht Wiedergabe.

Der Erste Deutsche Herbstsalon ist die stärkste deutsche Kunstausstellung.

Erster Deutscher Herbstsalon Der Sturm
75 Potsdamerstrasse 75
Gemälde aus der ganzen Welt

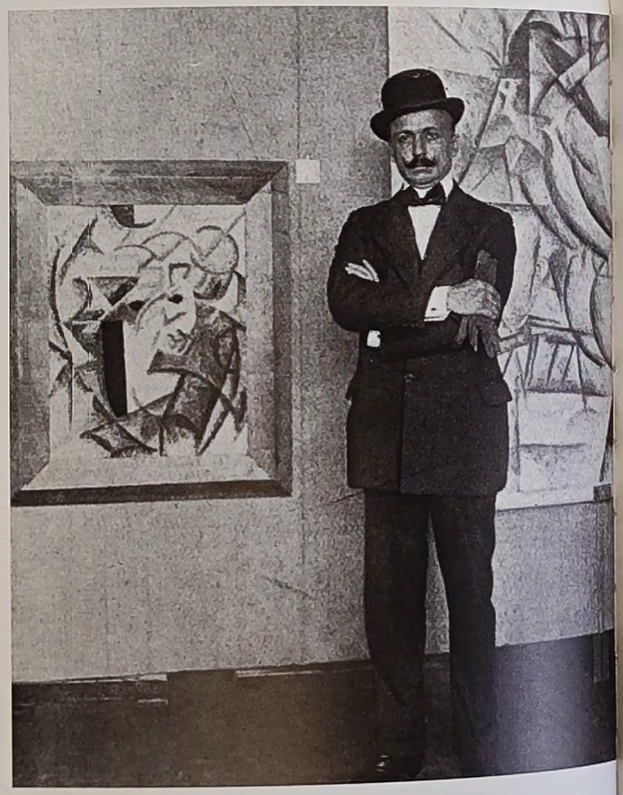
Lexikon der deutschen Kunstkritik

Zusammengestellt aus Zeitungs-Berichten über den Herbstsalon

Anödung des Publikums — Verhöhnung des Philisters — Unfähige Akademiker — Nichtskönner — Anmassliche Theoretiker — Neuigkeitsjäger — Buntfarbige Tölpel — Neger im Frack — Hottentotten im Oberhemd — Horde farbebespritzender Brüllaffen — Tollwütige Pinseleien — Kaffeehausliteratur — Farbenkrämpfe — Ideenkopfstände — Tollste Verrücktheiten — Griffelversuche des kleinen Fritzchens — Kirmesschützenscheiben — Krankhafte Erscheinung — Scheusslicher und lächerlicher Klumpen — Scharen von anspruchsvollen Toren — Fatzkereien — Dick aufgetragene Flecken schlechter Farbe — Malbotokuden — Hexensabbath — Aesthetische Gigerl — Gellende Clownsprünge — Grässendünkel — Negerhäuptling im Zylinder — Säugling im Frack — Neueste Kunsterkrankung — Prase von Talentlosigkeit — Manegernaturen — Bastardtalente — Renause — Verworrenheit der Psyche — Wahnwitziges Gebilde der Phantasie — Moden ohne Entwicklungsmöglichkeiten — Hohlheit der technischen Spielereien — Umgekehrte Philisterseele — Gemaltes Wahnsinn — Bluff — Unsumme von Lächerlichkeiten — Blöde Schmierereien — Gemäldegalerie eines Irrenhauses — Neue Wahnsinnsuniformen — Züchtung von Allerhässlichsten — Taumler aus Unfähigkeit — Kitschideen — Kasperltheater — Sensationsgier ästhetischer Roués — Panoptikumsspektakel — und so weiter

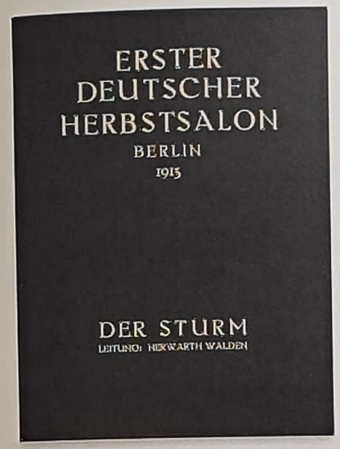
↗ On the reverse side, Walden's own pronouncements appear above the central banner announcing the "Erster Deutscher Herbstsalon Der Sturm"; "The audience is not the herd: art criticism is"; "Art critics view four hundred paintings in forty minutes: then they begin to write"; "Art exhibitions must be visited against the will of the critics"; "Art is about giftedness, not regurgitation"; "The First German Autumn Salon is the strongest German art exhibition." Printed below the banner is the "Lexicon of German Art Criticism: Compiled from Newspaper Reports on the Autumn Salon." (Translation, p. 148.)

← In another response to press reviews of the exhibition, Walden produced this flyer with the title "Call against the 'art critics.'" On the reverse he reprinted the "Lexicon of German Art Criticism" included on one of the posters for the show. (Facsimile, p. 143; translation, p. 148.)



→ Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, leader of the Italian Futurists, at the "First German Autumn Salon," 20 September 1913

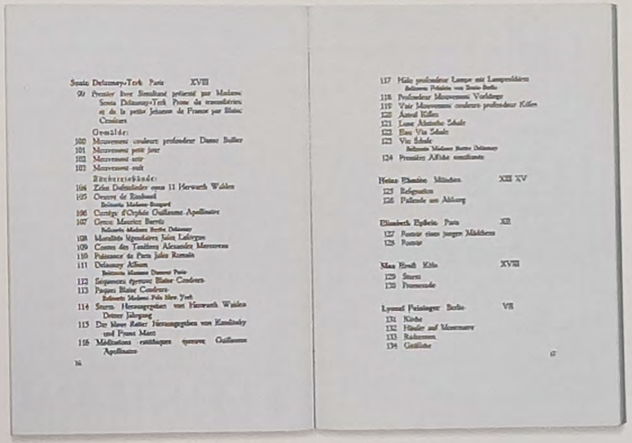
The show was held in a rented space of approximately 13,000 square feet (1200 square meters), divided into 19 sections. Works were hung on 7-foot-high (213 cm-high) partitions covered in tackcloth. The exhibition included works from key avant-gardist and modern movements. Futurism was represented by works by Giacomo Balla, Umberto Boccioni, Carlo Carrà and Luigi Russolo. (Herwarth Walden had shown work by Marinetti and the Futurists in an important show at his permanent gallery in April 1912, prior to the Autumn Salon.) Expressionism was represented by Franz Marc, Wassily Kandinsky, Gabriele Münter, August Macke, Paul Klee, and others; Cubism and Orphism, by Albert Gleizes, Fernand Léger, Louis Marcoussis, Jean Metzinger, Francis Picabia, and Robert Delaunay and his wife, Sonia Delaunay-Terk.



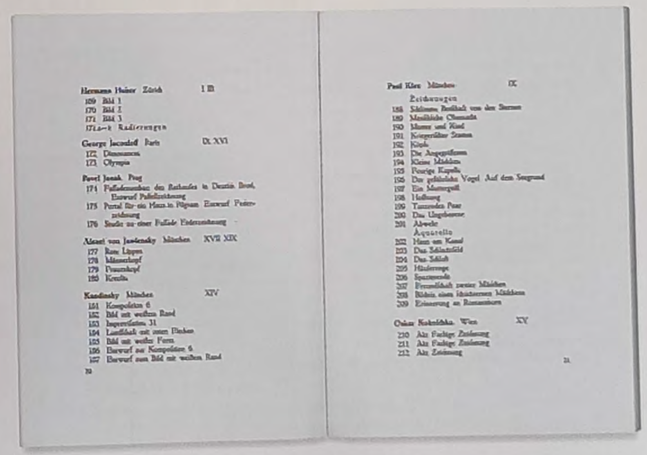
↑ Cover of the catalog for "The First German Autumn Salon," 1913. The catalog contains an introduction by Herwarth Walden (translation, p. 146), an essay titled "The Exhibitors" (often attributed to Franz Marc), and a list of 366 entries by 85 artists. The exhibition included a retrospective of 22 works by Henri Rousseau, as well as Japanese, Indian, and Chinese works, some on loan from the collections of Franz Marc and Wassily Kandinsky. Roman numerals to the right of the artists' names correspond to the section in which their works were installed.

↗ Delaunay-Terk, nos. 99–124, exhibited paintings and illustrated books, including her monumental illustrated book *Prose of the Trans-Siberian and of the Little Jeanne of France* by Blaise Cendrars (Frédéric Sauser). Max Ernst exhibited two works, nos. 129–130, and Lyonel Feininger exhibited four works, nos. 131–134.

→ Spread showing entries for works by Kandinsky, nos. 181–187, including his large-scale *Composition VI* (72⅛ × 108¼ ft/195 × 300 cm); Paul Klee, nos. 188–209; and Oskar Kokoschka.



Sonia Delaunay-Terk Paris XVIII
99 Premier livre Simultané présenté par Madame Sonia Delaunay-Terk Prose du transsibérien et de la petite Jehanne de France par Blaise Cendrars
Gemälde:
100 Mouvement couleur profondeur Dame Ballet
101 Mouvement petit jour
102 Mouvement noir
103 Mouvement midi
Zeichnungen:
104 Zehn Dekorative etwa 11 Herwarth Walden
105 Couvert de Rimbaud
Schwarz Madame Bongard
106 Corrège d'Orphée Guillaume Apollinaire
107 Genre Maurice Barrès
Reflexe Madame Sonia Delaunay
108 Matinées légendaires Jules Laforgue
109 Contes des Tendres Alexandre Mercereau
110 Poèmes de Paris Jules Romain
111 Delaunay Album
Schwarz Madame Damour Paris
112 Séquences rythmes Blaise Cendrars
113 Prques Blaise Cendrars
Reflexe Madame Pola Mora York
114 Sturm. Herausgegeben von Herwarth Walden Dritter Jahrgang
115 Der blaue Reiter Herausgegeben von Kandinsky und Franz Marc
116 Méditations esthétiques cubistes Guillaume Apollinaire



Hermann Huber Zürich I Ib
169 Bild 1
170 Bild 2
171 Bild 3
171a–k Radierungen
Georges Inconhoff Paris IX. XVI
172 Dimensions
173 Olympia
Paweł Jasnik Prag
174 Paßkartenentwurf des Rathauses in Deutsch Brod, Entwurf Paßeintheilung
175 Portal für ein Haus in Pilsnan Entwurf Fensterverdoppelung
176 Studie zu einer Fassade Fenstereintheilung
Alexej von Jawlensky München XVII XIX
177 Rote Lippen
178 Männerkopf
179 Frauenkopf
180 Kreuths
Kandinsky München XIV
181 Komposition 6
182 Bild mit weißem Rand
183 Improvisation 31
184 Landschaft mit roten Flecken
185 Bild mit weißer Form
186 Entwurf zur Komposition 6
187 Entwurf zum Bild mit weißem Rand

137 Viele profilierter Lampe mit Lampenschirm Reflexion Primitive von Sonia Berlin
138 Profilierter Mouvement Vorfahrer
139 Vier Mouvements couleurs profilierter Kleider
140 Animé Kleider
141 Leere Ästhetische Schule
142 Eine Vita Schule
143 Vita Schule
Reflexion Madame Sonia Delaunay
144 Premiere Affiche simultanée

Heinz Ehmsen München XIII XV
145 Religionen
146 Fallende am Abhang

Elisabeth Epheria Paris XII
147 Portrait einen jungen Mädchens
148 Portrait

Max Ernst Köln XVIII
149 Sturm
150 Promenade

Lyonel Feininger Berlin VII
151 Kirche
152 Häuser auf Mosemarre
153 Radiometer
154 Gänsliche

Paul Klee München IX
Zeichnungen
188 Schlimme Bestiensch von den Sternen
189 Menschliche Clownerie
190 Mimey und Kind
191 Kriegerischer Stamm
192 Kinds
193 Die Angepaßtheiten
194 Kleine Mädchen
195 Feurige Kapelle
196 Der gefährliche Vogel Auf dem Seegrund
197 Ein Mannergriff
198 Hoffnung
199 Tanzenden Paar
200 Das Ungeheuer
201 Abwehr
Aquarelle
202 Haus am Kanal
203 Das Schlachtfeld
204 Das Schloß
205 Hinterwege
206 Spaziergänge
207 Freundschaft zweier Mädchen
208 Bildnis eines schüchternen Mädchens
209 Erinnerung an Romanshorn

Oskar Kokoschka Wien XV
210 Alte Fischer Zeichnung
211 Alte Fischer Zeichnung
212 Alte Zeichnung

↑ Postcard sent by Robert Delaunay (in Paris) to Franz Marc (in Sindelsdorf, Germany, 8 August 1913). The card bears a stamp from "The First German Autumn Salon." Delaunay and Marc exhibited 20 works and 7 works, respectively, and were active participants in the exhibition, assisting August Macke and Paul Klee with the selection of artists.

DER STURM
HALBMONATSSCHRIFT FÜR KULTUR UND DIE KÜNSTE

DER STURM
HALBMONATSSCHRIFT FÜR KULTUR UND DIE KÜNSTE

↑↑ → Covers of *Der Sturm*, no. 180/181 (above) and no. 182/183 (right), October 1913. Edited by Herwarth Walden, drawings by Hans Arp. These two issues covered "The First German Autumn Salon," reprinting the catalog texts and Walden's defense of the exhibition to the German critics. *Der Sturm* was published from 1910 to 1932 and was a platform for avant-garde art and culture, with a particular focus on German Expressionism; its contents included poetry, literature, artists' writings, manifestos, and criticism.

Erster Deutscher Herbstsalon [exh. cat.]

Introduction

HERWARTH WALDEN

Berlin, 1913

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This first German Autumn Salon gives an overview of the new movement in the visual arts of all countries. At the same time, this overview will expand the horizons of contemporary viewers. Most of today's viewers are too proud of their eyes, with which they have not yet learned how to see. They demand that the artwork reproduce their own optical impressions, which are not even their own. If they had that sensibility, they would be artists already. Being an artist means to have one's own point of view and to be able to give it form. The unity of viewpoint and form is the essence of art, it is art. The great innovators of the nineteenth century left a twofold heritage, a material one which went to their heirs who anxiously held onto it, and a spiritual one, which is shown at this exhibition. The heirs of the former cling to forms which were created by greater artists. Instead of creating their own, they imitate forms of past paintings. In fact they imitate just the paintings, not even nature, which has been called upon so pitifully often. Imitation can never be art, whether it is of pictures or of nature. This ability to ape others is missing from the artists of the present, who have assumed the spiritual heritage of the great innovators. The talk is about the lack of form, but it should be about the lack of uniformity. All of us are human, but not one body resembles the next one. Sameness is achieved only through a uniform. One stays himself even if fashion changes the uniform. Even changing back to Biedermeier skirts, Roman togas, or Greek pleated dresses does not change anything about the body. Only the spirit, which the body serves, can change it. Of course, spirit cannot be painted, but painting the body without the spirit is really no art at all. Art is the personal shaping of a personal experience. The only thing that binds the artist and gives him support is the material of his art. Every conventional form, however, is a scaffold for a collapsing building or a corset for a sagging body. Art is presentation, and not representation. To enjoy a precious fruit the skin has to be sacrificed. Even the most beautiful surface cannot disguise the internal superficiality. The painter paints whatever he sees with his innermost senses, the expression of his being; everything fleeting is only a metaphor to him; his instrument is life; every impression from the outside to him becomes an expression from the inside. He is the carrier of his visions and he is carried by them, his inner apparitions. Can he help it when faces look different? Did the Ninth Symphony resound out toward Beethoven from the most beautiful landscape? Did his rhythm march out before him? But he did let human armies storm, win, or fall according to his will. Grünewald and Greco reshaped humanity after their paintings. The school of painting just passed set humanity up in costume balls. The artist was no longer educated, but was taught instead. The true artist has to be the creator of his forms. And all educated people should finally decide to look up from the passivity of education to the activity of painting.

I feel I have the right to hold this exhibit because I am persuaded of the value of the artists represented here. Because I am a personal friend of the most important artists of this new movement, through a friendship arising from similar artistic ideas and sensitivities. This international exhibition became a physical reality thanks to the material support and actual service of a true artistic friend of the movement. This is not the place to critically-analytically justify in detail my conviction about the value of those represented. That occasion will come during the exhibition through lectures and guided tours. True connoisseurs have promised me their support in this. I am sure that the nonartistic part of the public is going to laugh at this exhibit and at me. And also a good part of the public that regards itself as artistic, without justification. I especially want to warn these people. After ten years of the Society of Art, we already have a precedent in literature. The gentlemen and also the mediocre critics made fun of Thomas Mann, Alfred Mombert, Karl Kraus, and Else Lasker-Schüler. The artistic importance of these writers has been confirmed after only ten years or less, even by the most harmless daily newspapers, which, of course, does not mean anything, either for the artists or the papers. I am naming here only the most important names that were first brought to the larger public through the Society of Art. But there are already precedents in fine arts as well. When Oskar Kokoschka's prints were shown in every issue of the first year of the magazine, *Der Sturm*, the connoisseurs laughed, and even the worthy art critic, who now no longer knows where we are going, made fun of the scrawlings. Today, after three years, everybody scrambles for the prints that were ridiculed. Even now naive people maintain that painters today paint "in this manner" for business reasons, and that *Der Sturm* represented these painters for business reasons and not from artistic conviction. I gave one of these gentlemen—a critic—occasion to bring the evidence he proffered into a court of law. He wants to prove nothing less than that Kandinsky has joined this futuristic direction in art only out of business considerations. With such madness, hatred of art has gone too far. But such things cannot divert or hinder my friends and myself in our strivings.

We do not live for art. But art is our life.

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Originally published as "Vorrede." From Rose-Carol Washton Long, ed., German Expressionism: Documents from the End of the Wilhelmine Empire to the Rise of National Socialism *(Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 56–59. Translations edited by Nancy Ruth.*

"Die Presse und der Herbstsalon: Eine Gegenüberstellung"

HERWARTH WALDEN, ED.

Der Sturm — Berlin, October 1913

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Frankfurter Zeitung It is insinuated that some kind of progress or development could be seen in this show. Never was a claim more pretentious, never more ill-founded.

National-Zeitung Today, there is no doubt anymore, that the forces at work here are destined to stimulate and provide the foundation for the art of the future and its development.

Casseler Allgemeine Zeitung (Robert Breuer) Serious people will have finished looking at this exhibition very quickly. There are no problems here, only regrets and laughter.

Dresdener Neuste Nachrichten The day "The First German Autumn Salon" opened may be regarded as a historic date. There is something awe-inspiring in seeing protagonists and pioneers in all places advocating the new principles.

Hamburger Nachrichten This accumulation of absurdity, of inane daubing, is indeed a public nuisance. One feels like coming from an asylum's painting gallery.

Vorwärts (the same Robert Breuer) It is an art of extremes . . . It would however be a severe bias to call it mad and dabbling, as Meier-Gräfe recently did.

Fritz Stahl There is no more serious protest against impudence to treat this spattering as art, if only negatively. We are laughing.

Vorwärts (Robert Breuer again) One only needs to read the titles of all this crazy daubing to know that this is not really painting, but coffeehouse literature.

Deutsche Tageszeitung Those devoid of talent are lined up here in rank and file.

Vossische Zeitung As one can see, a visit is not worth one's time.

Pan I was thinking that from now on, nobody can create a marvelous painting in 55 minutes, nor replicate convincingly the depth of Delaunay's work within one season.

Fritz Stahl on Kandinsky, 1912 The appeal remains purely visual. Also, compared to decorative arrangements, it is being disturbed by the fiercely arbitrary lines. The effort spent on creating such a large picture stands in ridiculous opposition to its effect. The same impression can be achieved on a little piece of paper.

Leipziger Tageblatt Chagall uses glowing colors and imaginative verve. They are compelling and enthralling, even though one succumbs only reluctantly to such lure.

B.Z. am Mittag Franz Marc's animal paintings go one impression further, evolving into passionate compositions that embrace the fantastic boldly and at once.

Berliner Börsencourier Alfred Kubin's demonic metaphysical paintings lack any vigor.

Berliner Börsencourier Suddenly one sees a couple of Indian and Japanese pictures that put all Futurists to shame.

National-Zeitung Therefore, one should be careful before condemning or even deriding new art

forms, as this is unfortunately often the custom. *Hamburger Nachrichten* Further, it is called *Composition* [Komposition].—Them again *Contrasts* [Kontraste] or *Mystical Painting* [Mystisches Bild] or *Improvisation*, sometimes also simply *Painting 1* [Bild 1], *Painting 2* [Bild 2], *Painting 3* [Bild 3]. One can sense how difficult it has become for artists to name their paintings.

Volkszeitung There should not be any misapprehensions: those "youngsters" are not revolutionaries: they have matured and become more serene, but most of them are still very eccentric.

Volkszeitung . . . the exhibition is by far the most interesting among all the exhibitions one can see these days.

Vorwärts (again and again, Robert Breuer) Or Mr. Delaunay. He shows us the sun in four different versions. What he produces, however, are target images, like those fabricated by drunk peasant boys.

Fritz Stahl on Kandinsky, 1913 A experience, when looking at such a piece [by Kandinsky] a deeply inspiring and satisfying pleasure, which would suffice, to me, as a work of art . . . He (Kandinsky) is a color genius.

Vossische Zeitung . . . where jests could be seen, such as Marc Chagall's (Crucifixion, a bad imitation of a beautiful old miniature.

Hamburger Nachrichten . . . as incomprehensible as Franz Marc's apocalyptic wolves.

Berliner Lokal-Anzeiger Alfred Kubin, this well-known diabolic, who achieves ever deeper and richer formal solutions.

Leipziger Tageblatt In contrast, the samples of Indian and Chinese painting one sees here are rather unfortunate.

Leipziger Tageblatt Paul Klee presents drawings informed by the depth of children's drawings.

Berliner Allgemeine Zeitung Rousseau, whose simplified childlike manner reveals a refinement and deepening of the soul.

Berliner Börsencourier Paul Klee is the one who caused the rumor of the Max and Moritz drawings.

Cassele Allgemeine Zeitung (once again, Robert Breuer) Rousseau, a genuine, hairless dilettante.

"Lexikon der Deutschen Kunstkritik"

HERWARTH WALDEN, ED.

"Lexicon of German Art Criticism" from the poster for "The First German Autumn Salon"

Berlin, October 1913

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COMPILED FROM NEWSPAPER REPORTS ON THE AUTUMN SALON

Mind-numbing the audience — deriding the philistine — incompetent academics — good-for-nothings — arrogant theorists — sensationalists — idols with colorful skin — negros in tail-coats — Hottentots in dress shirts — hordes of color-spraying howler monkeys — rabid idiotic brush-work — coffeehouse literature — color cramps — ideas doing headstands — the most insane craziness — clumsy attempts of little Fritz — shooting targets — sickly apparitions — atrocious and ridiculous clumps — flocks of pretentious fools — big-headedness — thickly applied blotches of bad color — medieval peasants — witches' Sabbath — aesthetic candyism — yelling clown-leaps — extensive arrogance — little negro chief in a top hat — infant in a tail-coat — latest sickness of art — the patter of lacking talent — manager types — bastard talents — philistine — confusion of the psyche — lunatic forms from the imagination — fashions without hope for development — hollowness of technical gameplay — backward souls of philistines — painted insanity — bluffing — an enormous amount of ridiculousness — idiotic scribblings — picture gallery of an insane asylum — new uniforms of insanity — cultivation of the ugliest — pure incompetence — kitschy ideas — Punch and Judy theater — sensationalism of aesthetic hedonists — panoptikon spectacle — and so on

"Der Erster Deutscher Herbstsalon"

[excerpt]

CURT GLASER

Die Kunst für Alle — Berlin, 1 November 1913

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Under this exacting name and with a very self-assured opening speech Herwarth Walden introduces the largest of his hastily organized exhibitions to the Berlin audience. . . .

. . . Neither Marc nor Kandinsky know what they are doing by disclosing their ownership of two Indian paintings and a Chinese rice-picture, hanging in this exhibition. This in turn led to advertisements concerning the circle's worldwide relevance. Maybe it was the typesetter's fault that Udaipur changed to "Utaipar," and Rajputana to "Badjutana." It is hard to grasp the motivation behind the allusions to these places in the catalog: "from the court painter of the Maharaja of Utaipar." Moreover, the owner who gave his exceedingly mediocre pictures—Indian village paintings, latest replicas of famous hunting pictures that have been seen a thousand times—this high-falutin'-sounding title appeared surprisingly less naïve than, for instance, Mr. Neustadt, whose Japanese travel accounts recently delighted the experts. If these gentlemen don't possess a more discerning sense for art and consider Chinese penny pictures works of art worth debating, then one is also led to seriously doubt their ability to make value judgments on works of contemporary European art. If they don't perceive more in Henri Rousseau than in the daubing of the Russian peasant Pavel Kovalenko, who also figures in this exhibition, or in the Turkish sign paintings, then they do not understand well the fine art of this strange Frenchman. And by the way, they did not do Rousseau a service by organizing a so-called memorial exhibition featuring the last works found in his studio, after the Sezession had shown several of his best paintings two years ago.

These accessory details about the exhibition should suffice in revealing the paths along which the organizers have lost themselves. Marc is certainly an artist of taste, but his theoretic eccentricities endanger his path. It does not help Kandinsky if one finds his latest compositions and improvisations richer in colors than his earlier ones, for it is manifest that his way leads him unfailingly out of the fine arts, and he will not be content with the fame of a tapestry designer. After all, these two endeavors are not so far away from art, like almost everything else contained in this Autumn Salon, starting with the Italian Futurists all the way up through the newest revelations of the Parisian Orphists. It is not worth enumerating all the delirious acts committed by the Italian Kitsch-painters, which illustrate the program of their leader, Marinetti. Those who in the past took Severini seriously will now have their eyes opened by the monstrous portrait with the glued-on moustache. When it was first proclaimed, the poet's theory might have blindsided some, in the same way that, today, the theories of the musician Kandinsky hold a fascination for many. The lamentable students of Segantini, however, who put these theories into practice, were not even for a moment able to deceive those who can see that their intentions and the final execution don't have anything to do with each other.

In Picasso, we could see a fine artist falling victim to his own ideas. And yet, in his most abstruse formal inventions, the painter's hand still remained palpable. Not even Gleizes or Metzinger, who sent their large engines from this year's Salon des Indépendants, can be denied some artistic qualities. Their clumsy Russian and German epigones, though, lack yet the slightest connection to the fine arts. It is not worth trying to detect traces of greater or minor talent shining through in any of those artists' works. One must, however, say something about the Delaunay family, who appear with quite some pretensions. There is a man, a woman, and a four-year-old child, who allegedly participates as well. Bearing the profound title *Horse Prism Sun Moon* [Cheval prisme soleil lune], the child's wooden horse—which he has painted on—stands in front of a sort of colorful target. Delaunay himself, who at his beginnings had been a good painter and who has already shed many a skin, has finally arrived at the happy stage where he is giving up painting. Here, in the presence of sofa pillows and book covers which are produced alongside targets called sun and moon, the old allegation that this movement creates values pertaining, at best, to applied art can no longer be refuted. Marinetti, at least, had some ideas. In addition, Delaunay's jumbled titles lack wit, and without the explanatory catalog entries, all that is left are painted color boards.

It does not help the exhibition a lot that a couple of Kokoschka drawings, works by Hermann Huber and by Walter Helbig accidentally found their way into it. At last, appearing amid so many participants devoid of any talent might harm those painters' good reputation. Friends of the new movement in particular should resolutely oppose this exhibition, for nothing is going to hurt earnest aspirations and true mastery as much as these pseudo-moderns, who hide their immense deficiencies behind artificially acquired gestures.

"Kunstausstellungen"

KARL SCHEFFLER

Kunst und Künstler — Berlin, 1 November 1913

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The journal *Der Sturm* has mounted an international exhibition of paintings and sculptures by new artists with the somewhat presumptuous title "The First German Autumn Salon." It is impossible to provide an objective assessment of this display because it contains barely anything that can be appraised objectively; and it is equally inappropriate simply to mock it because one is filled with sadness at the sight of young people whose efforts appear so devoid of hope. Worst of all is the fact that any intimate contact with this revolutionary monomaniacal art makes the spectator himself feel degraded. The reason for this is not found in the revolutionary aspect of the new artistic aspirations, nor in the immaturity of the artists' experiments, nor in the inherent weakness of their talents. What is so oppressive here is the utter lack of youthful naturalness, the symptom of a contagious conceptual sickness: for a real hospital stench pervades the exhibition, and one detects a strong element of imaginative impurity in most of the works on display. Surveying in its entirety the output of all these groups of painters and sculptors, and also taking into account that of the good-for-nothing literary associates of *Der Sturm*, one feels as if one were watching an unhappy youth consumed with rage at himself. In mounting this undiscriminating exhibition of the latest art, its organizer has done a great deal of harm. Even his own enraged friends are now unambiguously disowning him. More graphically than any previous such event, this one shows what damage is done through an unrestrained display. It is impossible to convey in words the character of the art exhibited here. To adopt the sort of invented terms that Goethe might have used, one could say that the imitator, the sketcher, the specialist in imagining, the skeletist, the undulist, and the phantomist have here combined forces, or that we are witness to the evolution of a living caricature captioned *The Synthetists* [Synthetiker]. As an example of what is to be found in this exhibition, we can take a portrait of Marinetti, leader of the Futurists, by Gino Severini, in which the sleeves of the black suit, being made out of affixed pieces of paper curved into convex shapes, assume sculptural form, in which the jacket lapel is indicated by an affixed strip of real black velvet, the moustache is made of real hair, likewise affixed to the picture surface, while real scraps of newspaper printed with Futurist manifestos create a background. This playful way of proceeding is supposed to signify a break with the banal imitation of observed reality; it purports to give us, instead, the record of a spiritual impression. It is a great shame to find the work of one painter in particular—Franz Marc—in this dreadful exhibition. He is an artist of real talent, in whom creative power seethes with all the vitality of youth. We must hope that he will be able to free himself from this proletarian intellectual environment, that he will take the opportunity, when it arises, to break with such monstrous fanatics, idle hangers-on, and failed revolutionaries.

"Chronique Mensuelle" [excerpt]

GUILLAUME APOLLINAIRE

Les Soirées de Paris — Paris, 15 November 1913

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"The First German Autumn Salon" in Berlin, organized by the review *Der Sturm*, opened in September. The aim of the organizers, as stated by M. Herwarth Walden in his preface to the catalogue, was to provide a glimpse of what is happening in the plastic arts today throughout the world. It would be more accurate to say that this Salon presents the new tendencies in the plastic arts.

The place of honor at this exhibition has been accorded to the late, lamented Henri Rousseau, who is represented by twenty-one canvases and an ink drawing. I find this German homage to French painting extremely touching. Although Rousseau was not a member of the intellectual elite either by birth or by education, he nevertheless partook of French culture in general. The Douanier could not have been born in Germany, where even the most gifted young men must study if they want to become artists. It is a country of professors and doctors. The homage rendered to the Douanier is thus also rendered in France, the only country where he could have been born.

As a whole, the Berlin Autumn Salon is a glorification of the tendencies of the young painters, either French or working in Paris, and especially of orphism. The futurists are also represented, but they, too, are part of an artistic movement whose capital is Paris. . . .

This Berlin Salon is not complete, since it lacks the works by Matisse, Picasso, Derain,

Braque, Marie Laurencin, Dufy, and many others. Yet it is a historic exhibition, and if orphism first revealed itself at the Indépendants, this is the first salon of orphism.

We have received the following letter from Berlin:

"It is annoying to find oneself in agreement, even once, with men of inferior intelligence, such as M. Westheim, the art critic of the *Frankfurter Zeitung*. But the Autumn Salon in Berlin, organized by M. Walden, editor of *Der Sturm*, was a disappointment. The Rousseau retrospective was a great success, and its success meant, in the end, the triumph of the reactionary spirit in art. We are happy about it to the extent that it was the triumph of French taste, and the other French painters who also represent French taste–Gleizes, Léger, Metzinger–appeared moderate, unaffected, and refined in comparison with the German revolutionaries. We left this exhibition convinced that the German and Italian avant-garde painters are like certain converted Jews who, while retaining all their original virtues or defects, become the most intolerant Catholics of all.

"All the artists who could be identified with French taste and even with Slavic taste, such as Kandinsky, scandalized Berlin, but they scandalized it by their distinction."

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"Monthly Chronicle," in Guillaume Apollinaire, Apollinaire on Art: Essays and Reviews, 1902–1918, *ed. LeRoy C. Breunig (New York: Da Capo Press, 1988), 335. Translation by Susan Suleiman.*

"Der Erster Deutscher Herbstsalon"

[excerpt]

ADOLF BEHNE

Die Tat — Jena, Germany, 1913

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One has the right to consider with skepticism any enthusiasm for art which cannot or does not want to relate to the art of its own or that of the coming generation. One who loves Rembrandt and laughs at Delaunay has only been "swayed," in the case of the former, by the name's notoriety. If he were really able to sense Rembrandt's aesthetic merit, then it would be impossible for him to overlook it in Delaunay. It is not art itself, but art history that determines this person's likes and dislikes. Were there to be, by bizarre coincidence, a chronological reversal, he would love Delaunay and laugh at Rembrandt! He belongs among those who neighed full-heartedly and with steady zeal about Manet, 50 years ago, about Donatello, 500 years ago, or at any time about who is newly emerging. Today the *Sturm* exhibition, and especially "The First German Autumn Salon," provide to the philistine the most rewarding subject matter for cheering ellation.

One who thinks cheaply cannot seriously resent the philistine for his embittered battle against the new art! He fights for his existence! For when the new art arises, then his merry and comfortable rule is over. There is a great earnestness in this emerging movement, a humanity, whose measure cannot be assessed by everyone. It has a spiritual quality that remains, sure enough, inaccessible for all those to whom art is only a little bit of technique and a little bit of taste! The victory of the new art is not just a small matter consisting of some unusual lines and colors—which would have very soon been assimilated as applied art . . . —but no less than a true Renaissance! . . .

Realism is the one great possibility in art as well as in philosophy!—Idealism is the other one, which is not less justified, and even appears to some as deeper and more humane! How little does he who sees in the Autumn Salon's paintings the contortions of decadent snobs understand the signs of his times! The exact opposite is the case! A new, burgeoning era of Idealism is being proclaimed! To all who support Idealism in philosophy and music, I wish to call out emphatically that this is an art form of an idealistic nature fighting for its very existence! It should not be subjected to the disparaging diatribes of critics, who believe in the shallowest positivism! The new art is the parallel to Bergson's philosophy; it is closer to Plato's ideas than to Ostwald's precepts. All those who have respect and appreciation for a great and deep spiritual movement of an entirely idealistic character should stand together against the critics of the day who have nothing better to do than to hit young artists with clubs!

Walden, the Autumn Salon's organizer, had invited me to give a series of gallery talks. From that experience I gained the impression that the critics' malevolence ("Hottentots," sorcerers, speculators, fops, etc.) does not adequately reflect the perception of the general public. Almost everywhere I encountered the sincere desire for objective clarification. There was also a marked tendency to confront the new art with respect and modesty even when one was not enthralled!

Were the Berlin Autumn Salon to present nothing but Delaunay's twenty pictures, it would still be an event, one in which every individual amenable to art should joyfully partake, so entrancing is the radiant purity of its resonating color music! However, in addition to Delaunay, there is Franz Marc, who might go unrecognized only because he is a German master through and through. Furthermore, there is the Russian Kandinsky, the Norman Léger, who naturally belongs among the frowned-upon cubists, and whose construction is allegedly incomprehensible! As if the scientific perspective—which, since Mantegna, belongs to the permanent inventory of European art (not at all to the necessary inventory of all art!)—was not a construction as well! The only difference being that the perspective, in principle, is a construction external to art, since it is of purely intellectual, scientific origin! However, the cubist's construction, being an emotional one, is by far more artistic!

We definitely must free ourselves from traditional notions if we want to do justice to new art. This will be difficult for some, since the concepts that stand in the way of truly experiencing those works of art are about 500 years old. Besides, not everybody is like the historian, always aware of the vast and complex field of art, which has never been in agreement with the time-bound concepts of our latest developments! We must, however, free ourselves from these notions, if not for the express reason that in art, it is not the concept, but the emotion, that reigns. Moreover, true appreciation of the earlier art by a Raphael or a Rembrandt would only gain, rather than lose anything. Nietzsche's quote from the *Untimely Meditations* is still timely: "By moving forward, by setting yourselves a higher goal, you subdue this profuse analytic drive which is now destroying your present and is almost thwarting all calm, all peaceful growth and maturation. Draw around yourselves the fence of a great and all-embracing expectation, of an eager aspiration. Create in yourselves an image that the future should be likened to, and forget the superstitious belief that you are epigones!"

II

International Exhibition of Modern Art *The Armory Show*

New York, 1913

LOCATION AND DATES

Armory of the 69th Regiment of Infantry, 68 Lexington Avenue, New York, 17 February–15 March 1913

ORGANIZER

Association of American Painters and Sculptors, Inc.

ITINERARY

The Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, 24 March–16 April 1913; Copley Society of Boston, Boston, 28 April–19 May 1913

ARTISTS

Albert Abendschein, Robert I. Aitken, John H. Alger, Karl Anderson, Alexander Archipenko, Edmund Marion Ashe, Florence Howell Barkley, George Grey Barnard, Chester Beach, Gifford Beal, Wladimir Von Bechtejeff, Maurice Becker, Marion H. Beckett, George Bellows, Joseph Bernard, Nelson N. Bickford, Karl Bitter, Olaf Bjorkman, Alexandre Blanchet, Oscar Bluemner, Hanns Bolz, Pierre Bonnard, Solon Borglum, Homer Boss, Émile-Antoine Bourdelle, Constantin Brancusi, Georges Braque, Bessie Marsh Brewer, D. Putnam Brinley, Bolton Brown, Fannie Miller Brown, Patrick Henry Bruce, Paul Burlin, Edith Woodman Burroughs, Theodore Earl Butler, Charles Camoin, Arthur Beecher Carles, Mary Cassatt, O. E. Cesare, Paul Cézanne, Auguste-Elisée Chabaud, O. N. Chaffee, Robert W. Chanler, Emilie Charmy, Amos Chew, Alfred Vance Churchill, Gustave Cimiotti, Jr., Edwin S. Clymer, Harry W. Coate, Nessa Cohen, Glenn O. Coleman, Howard Coluzzi, Charles Conder, Camille Corot, Kate T. Cory, Gustave Courbet, Arthur Crisp, Henri-Edmond Cross, Herbert Crowley, J. Frank Currier, Carl Gordon Cutler, Leon Dabo, Andrew Dasburg, Honoré Daumier, Randall Davey, Jo Davidson, Arthur B. Davies, Charles H. Davis, Stuart Davis, Edgar Degas, Eugène Delacroix, Robert Delaunay, Maurice Denis, André Derain, Edith Dimock, Rudolph Dirks, Nathan (Nathaniel) Dolinsky, G. Ruger Doncho, Henri-Lucien Doucet, Katherine S. Dreier, Aileen King Dresser, Lawrence Tyler Dresser, Florence Dreyfous, Marcel Duchamp, Raymond Duchamp-Villon, Richard H. Duffy, Georges-Léon Dufresnoy, Raoul Dufy, Abastenia St. Léger Eberle, Henry B. Eddy, Jean Eells, Amos W. Engle, Jacob Epstein, Florence Este, Lily Everett, Jules Flandrin, Mary H. Hallock Foote, James Earle Fraser, Kenneth Frazier, Ernest Arthur Freund, Othon Friesz, Sherry E. Fry, Ernest Fuhr, Paul Gauguin, Samuel Wood Gaylor, Phelan Gibb, Wilhelm Gimmi, Pierre Girieud, William Glackens, Albert Gleizes, Henry I. Glintenkamp, Vincent van Gogh, Anne Goldthwaite, Francisco José de Goya y Lucientes, Charles Guérin, Bernard Gussow, Bernhard Gutmann, Philip L. Hale, Samuel Halpert, Charles R. Hatley, Marsden Hartley, Childe Hassam, Edith Haworth, Walter Helbig, Robert Henri, Julius Hess, Eugene Higgins, Margaret Hoard, Ferdinand Hodler, Nathaniel Hone, Charles Hopkinson, Edward Hopper, Cecil de B. Howard, Albert Humphreys, Mrs. Thomas Hunt, Margaret Wendell Huntington, Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres, James Dickson Innes, F. M. Jansen, Augustus E. John,

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EXHIBITION CATALOGS

International Exhibition of Modern Art, preface by Frederick James Gregg, and *Supplement to Catalogue Containing Additions, Errata and Exhibits Catalogued but Not Received*. Both catalogs, New York: Association of American Painters and Sculptors and Vreeland Press, 1913. Catalogs for the traveling exhibitions include: *International Exhibition of Modern Art*, Chicago and Boston.

RELATED PUBLICATIONS

For and Against: Views on the International Exhibition Held in New York and Chicago, edited by Frederick James Gregg; statements and essays by Kenyon Cox, Frederick James Gregg, F. J. Mather, Jr. Walter Pach, and Francis Picabia; *Cézanne* by Élie Faure, translated by Walter Pach; *Noa-Noa* by Paul Gauguin, excerpts translated by Walt Kuhn; *Odilon Redon* by Walter Pach; *A Sculptor's Architecture* by Walter Pach. All related publications, New York: Association of American Painters and Sculptors and Vreeland Press, 1913.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Number of artists: c. 308

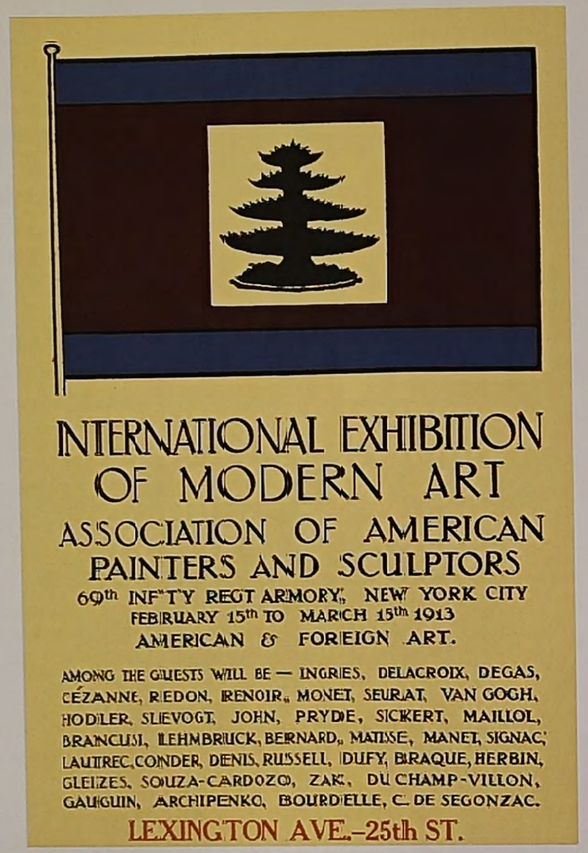
Number of works: c. 1300 New York; c. 634 Chicago; c. 244 Boston

Total attendance: New York, c. 88,000; Chicago, c. 188,000; Boston, c. 13,000

Organized by a group of American artists as a venue for promoting their own work, the exhibition that has come to be known as The Armory Show had the unintended consequence of creating national awareness of, and developing a market for, the most radical European modern art. After seeing a catalog for the International Exhibition of the Sonderbund in Cologne, the head of the Association of American Painters and Sculptors, Arthur B. Davies, dispatched artist Walt Kuhn to visit the show and begin gathering foreign works for their New York exhibition. The shock that the provincial Kuhn experienced at the Sonderbund—which included a retrospective of 125 works by Vincent van Gogh and scores of pieces by Paul Gauguin, Paul Cézanne, Edvard Munch, and Pablo Picasso—would reverberate across the Atlantic with the more than four hundred European paintings and sculptures that he and a few colleagues assembled during two months of travel.

At The Armory Show, works by American artists outnumbered those of Europeans by two to one. But it was the Europeans who garnered the attention, most loudly in the mockery of Henri Matisse and the hilarity greeting Marcel Duchamp's *Nude Descending a Staircase (No. 2)*, 1912, which was displayed in a room that would be called "the Chamber of Horrors." The show's organizers pulled in the crowds—which totaled 88,000 in New York and swelled by 100,000 more when the show traveled to the Art Institute of Chicago (where students burned Matisse in effigy)—by using American advertising methods, including a paid press agent, a color poster distributed nationwide, and sets of postcards. (They even considered using an electric billboard in Times Square.)

But the consequences of The Armory Show were more substantial than mass attendance and publicity. Important collections of modern art began or developed there, including that of Lillie P. Bliss, which would anchor the Museum of Modern Art, New York, after its founding in 1929. The Armory Show also led to a proliferation of exhibitions of modern American and European art, with almost two hundred such shows held in New York alone in the next five years. Even though painter Stuart Davis compared it to a buffet in which the European guests trampled their naïve hosts, The Armory Show was crucial to opening the way for modern artists in America.


INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION
OF MODERN ART
ASSOCIATION OF AMERICAN
PAINTERS AND SCULPTORS
69th INF'TY REGT ARMORY, NEW YORK CITY
FEBRUARY 15th TO MARCH 15th 1913
AMERICAN & FOREIGN ART.
AMONG THE GUESTS WILL BE — INGRES, DELACROIX, DEGAS, CÉZANNE, REDON, RENOIR, MONET, SEURAT, VAN GOGH, HODLER, SLEVOGT, JOHN, PRYDE, SICKERT, MAILLOL, BRANCUSI, LEHMBRUCK, BERNARD, MATISSE, MANET, SIGNAC, LAUTREC, CONDER, DENIS, RUSSELL, DUFY, BRAQUE, HERBIN, GLEIZES, SOUZA-CARDOZO, ZAK, DU CHAMP-VILLON, GAUGUIN, ARCHIPENKO, BOURDELLE, C. DE SEGONZAC.
LEXINGTON AVE.–25th ST.

← Poster for The Armory Show. The Association of American Painters and Sculptors embarked on a national advertising campaign, distributing posters to colleges, libraries, and museums.

↓ Invitation to the opening, 17 February 1913. The 4,000 guests who attended were entertained by the 69th Regiment Band, performing in the upper balcony of the armory.

The President and Members of the
Association of American Painters and Sculptors
invite you to be present
at the formal opening of the
International Exhibition of Modern Art
Monday evening February seventeenth, 1913
from eight to eleven o'clock
at the Armory
69th Regiment of Infantry, N.G.N.Y.
Lexington Avenue, 25th and 26th Streets

PLEASE PRESENT THIS CARD AT THE DOOR

MODERNE GALERIE / HEINRICH THANNHAUSER

MÜNCHEN, den 12. Juli 1913.

Verehrl.
Association of American Painters and Sculptors Inc.
Ive East Twenty - Fifth Street,
New-York City

Von den zurückgesandten Arbeiten fehlen folgende drei Aquarelle von Doucet:

these were in Chicago but not in Boston

1) Nr 1840 " Torre del grano " £ 80.-
2) " 1913 " Orsay " " 80.-
3) " 1924 " Palermo " " 80.-

Ich habe bereits bei Gebrüder Reisch reklamiert, der mir mitteilt, sowie sie nicht bei ihn eingetroffen sind und bitte ich um gefl. umgehende Mitteilung, an mit den drei Aquarellen ist, ob sie etwa verkauft sind oder wenn sie auch hier zurückgesandt wurden.

Hochachtungsvoll
Heinrich Thannhauser

July 28th
Dear Walt, I forgot to leave you this. You would have best whether to write to Nitsch or Cottier about it. I wrote Cottier to inform Flechtheim of the disposition of his Rousseau, you were to write Nitsch about the Leibl. I think. Thanks again for the good time last night.
Yours
Pach

Come in any day this week you like.

GALERIE E. DRUET.
„TABLEAUX MODERNES"
20 RUE ROYALE
Téléphone 152-48
Paris, le 6 Décembre 1912

Monsieur Walter Pach
98 Boulevard Raspail
Paris

Monsieur,
Voici les prix de vente demandés à l'exposition pour les trois tableaux à Mr and Mrs Cone.

Mr 4667	" Nature morte "	Jo Gauguin	1889	
4746	" Tableau "	"	1890	
7181	" Bord de Seine "	"	1892	
2847	" La Toilette "	Van Gogh	[illegible]	1500
6986	" Paul Gauguin "	"	"	
7082	" Cellier "	"	"	
4767	" Hameau "	Seurat	[illegible]	1891

Veuillez accepter, Monsieur, mes bien sincères salutations.

Druet

Handwriting by Picasso

Jean Gris
13 Rue Ravignan
Metzinger
Gleizes
Léger
Duchamp
Delaunay
Le Fauconnier
Marcoussis
Villon
Fresnaye
Braque

List prepared by Picasso 1912

Walt Kuhn, Walter Pach, and other members of the Association of American Painters and Sculptors collaborated with a variety of American and European artists and galleries to obtain material for the exhibition.

↖↖ Correspondence from Moderne Galerie–Heinrich Thannhauser, Munich, 16 July 1913, with an inquiry regarding the whereabouts of three watercolors by Henri Lucien Doucet that were included in the exhibition.

↖ Correspondence from Galerie E. [Émile] Druet, Paris, 6 December 1912, providing catalog information for works by Paul Gauguin, Vincent van Gogh, and Georges Seurat.

↑ Pablo Picasso's list of recommended European artists. Georges Braque was later added to the list, most likely by Kuhn.

←← Correspondence from Alfred Stieglitz to Kuhn, 4 February 1913, regarding the works Stieglitz contributed from his personal collection to The Armory Show.

← Telegram from Pach to artist Constantin Brancusi, 6 June 1913, asking Brancusi to send the bronze version of his sculpture *Mademoiselle de Pogany* (the marble version of this work was included in the exhibition).

291 Fifth Ave., New York.
February 4, 1913.

My dear Mr. Kuhn:

At the request of Mr. Davies I am herewith sending you the entry blanks of John Marin and A. Walkowitz. It has been understood between Mr. Davies and myself that the Walkowitz and Marin's might be sent to Boston, but except on conditions to Chicago. In case your Society decides to ship part of the coming exhibition to Boston or Chicago.

I am also enclosing a list of the Walkowitz and Picasso's Mr. Davies has asked for loan for the coming exhibition. These Picasso's and Walkowitz, it is understood, are to be returned to me after the close of the show in New York. I do not want them sent on the road. It is also understood that your Society takes full responsibility for either loss, damage, or fire in regards to them, or the framed Marins.

Yours sincerely,
Alfred Stieglitz

WESTERN UNION CABLEGRAM

New York, June 6th. 1913

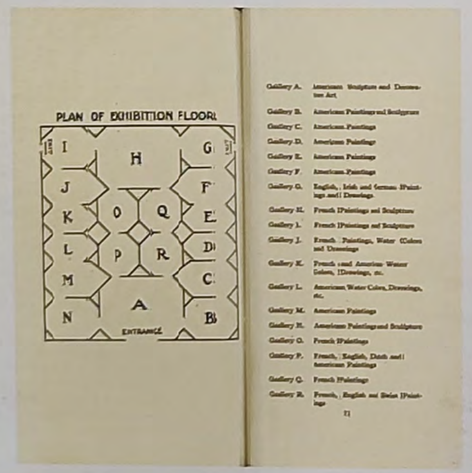
To Brancusi
54 rue du Montparnasse
Paris

Envoyez bronze de Pogany aussitôt que possible Reserve
marbre de même Nous esperons le placer.
Pach

Week-end Cablegram.
Paid.

← Armory of the 69th Regiment of Infantry, Lexington Avenue, between 25th and 26th Streets, New York. The imposing brick building was designed and completed in 1906 by the prominent architecture firm Hunt and Hunt. The Armory Show was installed in the drill hall, a 34,000-square-foot space with a barrel-vaulted roof and skylight spanning the full length of the hall.

↙ Floor plan, The Armory Show (as printed in the catalog), Armory of the 69th Regiment of Infantry, New York. American works greeted the viewer in Gallery A, and continued along the side galleries. Historical artists, such as the Americans James McNeill Whistler, John Twachtman, and Theodore Robinson, and the Europeans Honoré Daumier, Eugène Delacroix, Gustave Courbet, Camille Corot, and Édouard Manet, were concentrated in the central galleries. Contemporary French painting and sculpture was shown in Gallery H, and in the far corner of the building was Gallery I, nicknamed "the Chamber of Horrors" after the Cubist works by Marcel Duchamp, Francis Picabia, Pablo Picasso, and Georges Braque displayed on its walls.


PLAN OF EXHIBITION FLOOR

Gallery A. American Sculpture and Decorative Art.
Gallery B. American Paintings and Sculpture
Gallery C. American Paintings
Gallery D. American Paintings
Gallery E. American Paintings
Gallery F. American Paintings
Gallery G. English, Irish and German Paintings and Drawings
Gallery H. French Paintings and Sculpture
Gallery I. French Paintings and Sculpture
Gallery J. French Paintings, Water Colors and Drawings
Gallery K. French and American Water Colors, Drawings, etc.
Gallery L. American Water Colors, Drawings, etc.
Gallery M. American Paintings
Gallery N. American Paintings and Sculpture
Gallery O. French Paintings
Gallery P. French, English, Dutch and American Paintings
Gallery Q. French Paintings
Gallery R. French, English and Swiss Paintings

↓ A season ticket to the exhibition in New York cost $5. The one-time entrance fee was $1 on weekday mornings, and $.25 in the afternoons, evenings, and weekends. The exhibition was open seven days a week for almost four complete weeks, and had about 88,000 visitors.

SEASON TICKET
International Exhibition of Modern Art
ASSOCIATION OF AMERICAN
PAINTERS & SCULPTORS, Inc.
NEW YORK CITY
69th Regiment Armory, Lexington Ave., 25th and 26th Sts.
FEBRUARY 18th to MARCH 15th, 1913
Week Days . . 10 a. m. to 10 p. m.
Sundays . . 2 p. m. to 10 p. m.
VOID
THIS TICKET IS NOT TRANSFERABLE
PRICE $5.00

→ View from the entrance to the armory on Lexington Avenue. The show's organizers divided the space into 18 octagonal-shaped galleries to house nearly 1300 works of art. The 12-foot partitions were covered in fireproof burlap; yellow cloth streamers hung from the ceiling, creating a tent like effect.

↓ Gallery A, devoted to American sculpture and decorative arts, included George Grey Barnard's sculpture *Prodigal Son and His Father*, center.

↘ Gallery H contained French painting and sculpture; on the left is Constantin Brancusi's marble *Mademoiselle de Pogany*, and in the center is Wilhelm Lehmbruck's *Kneeling Woman*.

International Exhibition Modern Art
New York

To our Friends and Enemies of the Press

The Association of American Painters and Sculptors, Inc.

March 8th BEEFSTEAK DINNER 1913
Healy's—66th St. and Columbus Ave.

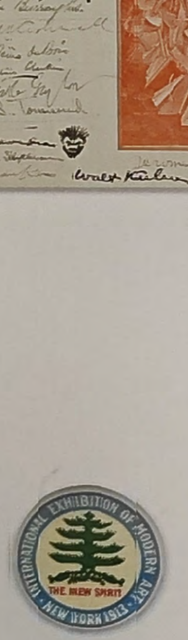
MENU

ALL YOU CAN EAT AND DRINK

For the Poor Boys

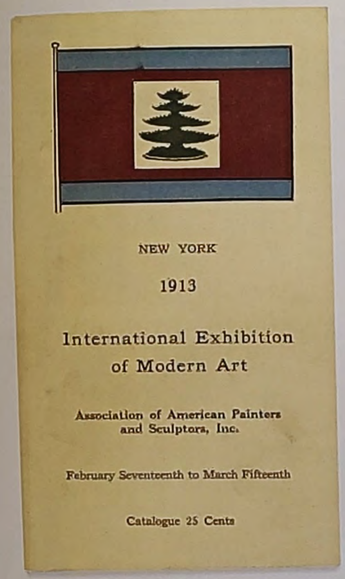
← Autographed menu from the beefsteak dinner hosted by the Association of American Painters and Sculptors honoring "Friends and Enemies of the Press," Healy's Restaurant, New York, 8 March 1913. The menu features one of the most widely criticized works in the exhibition, Marcel Duchamp's *Nude Descending a Staircase (No. 2)*.

↙ Button commemorating the exhibition. The Association of American Painters and Sculptors adopted a symbol of the American Revolution, the pine tree flag, as the logo of The Armory Show. Its motto was "The New Spirit." Other merchandise available at the exhibition included a tie tack and black-and-white postcards of exhibited works, which could be mailed from a temporary mailbox set up by the Post Office inside the armory.



↓ Beefsteak dinner, Healy's Restaurant, New York, 8 March 1913. Seated against the back wall are the show's organizers (left to right): Walt Kuhn, Frederick Gregg, Arthur Davies, John Quinn, and Walter Pach. Other attendees included the critics James B. Townsend, seated at the center table, Guy Pène du Bois, and Henry McBride, far right.

↓ ↘ Cover and spread from the catalog for the "International Exhibition of Modern Art," New York, 1913. Anticipating a high turnout for the exhibition, the Association of American Painters and Sculptors printed 50,000 copies of the catalog.



NEW YORK

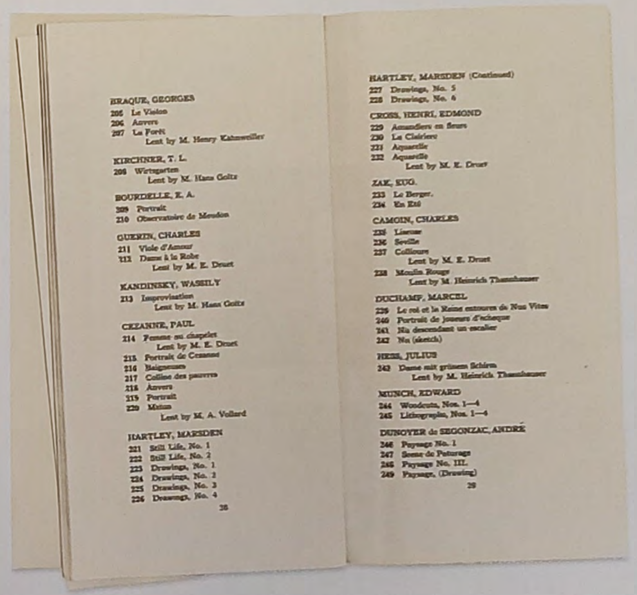
1913

International Exhibition of Modern Art

Association of American Painters and Sculptors, Inc.

February Seventeenth to March Fifteenth

Catalogue 25 Cents



BRAQUE, GEORGES
205 Le Viaion
206 Anvers
207 La Forêt
Lent by M. Henry Kahnweiller

KIRCHNER, T. L.
206 Wirtsgarten
Lent by M. Hans Goltz

BOURDELLE, E. A.
209 Portrait
210 Observatoire de Meudon

QUERIN, CHARLES
211 Viole d'Amour
212 Dame à la Robe
Lent by M. E. Druet

KANDINSKY, WASSILY
213 Improvisation
Lent by M. Hans Goltz

CÉZANNE, PAUL
214 Femme au chapelet
Lent by M. E. Druet
215 Portrait de Comme
216 Baigneuses
217 Colline des pauvres
218 Anvers
219 Portrait
220 Maison
Lent by M. A. Vollard

HARTLEY, MARSDEN
221 Still Life, No. 1
222 Still Life, No. 2
223 Drawings, No. 1
224 Drawings, No. 2
225 Drawings, No. 3
226 Drawings, No. 4

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HARTLEY, MARSDEN (Continued)
227 Drawings, No. 5
228 Drawings, No. 6

CROSS, HENRI, EDMOND
229 Amandiers en fleurs
230 Le Cimetière
231 Aquarelle
232 Aquarelle
Lent by M. E. Druet

ZAK, EUG.
233 Le Berger.
234 En Eté

CAMOIN, CHARLES
235 Lisieux
236 Seville
237 Collioure
Lent by M. E. Druet
238 Moulin Rouge
Lent by M. Heinrich Thannhauser

DUCHAMP, MARCEL
239 Le roi et la Reine entourés de Nus Vites
240 Portrait de joueurs d'échecque
241 Nu descendant un escalier
242 Nu (sketch)

HESS, JULIUS
243 Dame mit grünem Schirm
Lent by M. Heinrich Thannhauser

MUNCH, EDVARD
244 Woodcuts, Nos. 1—4
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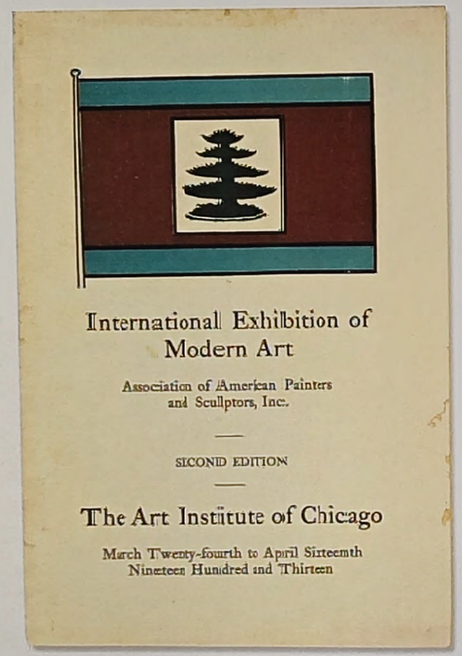
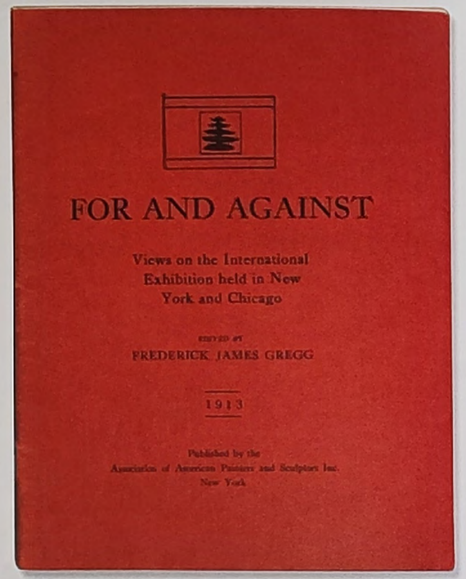
DUNOYER de SEGONZAC, ANDRÉ
246 Paysage No. 1
247 Soeur de Paturage
248 Paysage No. III.
249 Paysage, (Drawing)

29

↓ Four pamphlets published in conjunction with the exhibition (left to right): an essay describing Raymond Duchamp-Villon's *La maison cubiste*, a Cubist architectural façade included in The Armory Show; an essay on Odilon Redon, who was represented by 38 works in Gallery J; a translation of art historian Élie Faure's essay on Paul Cézanne; and a partial translation of Paul Gauguin's Tahitian journal, *Noa-Noa*.





↖ Cover of the catalog for the "International Exhibition of Modern Art," Art Institute of Chicago, March–April 1913. At the show's second venue, 12,000 catalogs were sold to the more than 188,000 visitors. The increase in attendance in Chicago was due in part to the free admission offered one day a week and to the national press coverage the show received while in New York.

↑ *For and Against*, a pamphlet published specifically for the Chicago venue, includes both positive and negative reviews of the New York exhibition.

↓ At the Art Institute of Chicago, 634 works were exhibited, about half the number shown in New York. The French painting and sculpture sections remained mostly intact in comparison with the New York installation, while the less controversial American, English, Irish, and German sections were reduced.

Installation views of The Armory Show, Art Institute of Chicago, March–April 1913.

↑ Works by Paul Cézanne, Vincent van Gogh, and Paul Gauguin, Gallery 52.

↗ Cubist room, Gallery 53.

→ American room, Gallery 54.

March 27, 1913.

My dear Mr. Rosenberg:

Your letter of March 25th is received.

I was very sorry to hear of your illness but trust that you, as well as Mrs. Rosenberg, have both recovered your health.

While it is not definitely settled that we are to have the Cubist-Futurist exhibition, yet it is practically certain. We shall probably know within a day or two. The exhibition will last for three weeks, opening on April 25th and closing on May 13th. The terms of our contract with the Association of American Painters and Sculptors are satisfactory and relieve the Copley Society of for great financial risk. The exhibition will almost certainly interest the public if from nothing more than sheer curiosity.

As to asking Mr. Key to give a lecture at the exhibition, this is a matter which the committee had better decide. Personally, I should doubt the advisability. We all feel that the Society should make some sig to give any sanction to the movement, so that we may be understood on this score. I took pains to state the following in a recent letter to Mr. Morton, the President of the Association of American Painters and Sculptors: "It is interesting to note the sentiment which is being expressed here. Much interest on the part of some and violent dispute and opposition on the part of others. All that the Copley Society aims to do in giving this exhibition in Boston is to satisfy the desire of the public for knowledge of a types of work which has excited great curiosity. We think it is fair that the people of Boston should be given this opportunity of judging for themselves the merits or demerits of this movement." I presume we shall soon have another meeting of the exhibition committee when I hope you will be able to be present.

Very sincerely yours,

(Signed) Edward W. Warren

Mr. Frank Cair Rosenberg,
181 Milk Street,
Boston, Mass.

↑ ↓ Correspondence related to the Boston venue of the International Exhibition of Modern Art." Due to lack of space at Copley Hall, the exhibition consisted of 240–300 works by European artists only.

← Cover of the catalog for The Armory Show, Boston, April–May 1913.

International Exhibition of Modern Art

Under the Auspices of

ASSOCIATION OF AMERICAN PAINTERS AND SCULPTORS, Incorporated

COPLEY SOCIETY OF BOSTON
COPLEY HALL
April Twenty-eighth to May Nineteenth
1913

DAY LETTER
THE WESTERN UNION TELEGRAPH COMPANY
25,000 OFFICES IN AMERICA CABLE SERVICE TO ALL THE WORLD

Received at HOTEL BRUNSWICK, 520 BOYLSTON ST. BOSTON

NS NEWYORK NY APR 14 13

EDWD R WARREN,

COPLEY SOCIETY OF BOSTON,

COPLEY HALL.

AMERICAN SECTION TOO LARGE TO ADD ENTIRELY AND IMPOSSIBLE TO DISCRIMINATE IN SAME AFTER CAREFUL CONSIDERATION OUR JUDGEMENT MISTAKE TO ADD SAME AND SPOIL SCHOOL AND APPEARANCE OF SHOW. WITH DRAWAL OF AMERICAN EXHIBITS BASED ON REPORT OF MR TAYLOR THAT YOUR SPACE LIMITED EXHIBITION AT CHICAGO SUFFERED GREATLY THROUGH OVERCROWDING ABSENCE OF AMERICANS EASILY EXPLAINED TO PRAIRIEREE PUBLIC

KUHN, 342PM

"The First Great 'Clinic to Revitalize Art'; Purposes of the Forthcoming Exhibition by the 'Revolutionists' Who Believe the Old Masters Should Be Destroyed, and That True Art Cannot Even Imitate Nature, Explained by a Distinguished American Leader of the Movement"

ALFRED STIEGLITZ

New York American — 26 January 1913

—

(Mr. Stieglitz is recognized in the world's chief art centres as one of the earliest prophets and the most active champion of the new and astonishing revolutionary movement in art, which its enemies of the conventional school have scoffingly labelled "Futurism." His unpretentious little galley on Fifth avenue, New York, is general headquarters for so-called "Futurists" in this country and their visiting comrades of other countries. As all these artists of the new movement detest names and labels, they have distinguished Alfred Stieglitz's modest showroom by making it famous the world over simply as "291"—its avenue number. Mr. Stieglitz's article, printed on this page, was contributed to this newspaper in the form of an interview.)

The dry bones of a dead art are rattling as they never rattled before. The hopeful birth of a new art that is intensely alive is doing it. A score or more of painters and sculptors who decline to go on doing merely what the camera does better, have united in a demonstration of independence—an exhibition of what they see and dare express in their own way—that will wring shrieks of indignation from every ordained copyist of "old masters" on two continents and their adjacent islands.

This glorious affair is coming off during the month of February at the Sixty-ninth Regiment Armory in New York. Don't miss it. If you still belong to the respectable old first primer class in art, you will see there stranger things than you ever dreamed were on land or sea—and you'll hear a battle cry of freedom without any soft pedal on it.

When the smoke has cleared away you'll go back to your habitual worship of eternal repetitions of mere externals of people and things that cram all the museums and galleries—but you won't feel happy. The mere outside of things won't satisfy you as it used to. And maybe the idea will dawn upon you that some genius will rise with power to prove that art is being revitalized.

An Alienist Will Charge You $5,000 to Tell You if You're Crazy; Go to the Cubist Show and You'll Be Sure of It for a Quarter

Imagination Outside the Psychopathic Ward of Bellevue or the Confines of Matteawan Can Conceive Without Actually Seeing It What a Cubist Picture Is Like."

THE ORIGINAL CUBIST.

CUBIST ART CALLED LEWD

Investigator for Senate Vice Commission Fears Immoral Effect on Artists.

THE EVENING MAIL

The John Wanamaker Store Presents for the First Time in Amer

Color Combinations of the Futurists Cubist Influence in Fashions

in the new Paris Models for Spring

NOBODY WHO HAS BEEN DRINKING IS LET IN TO SEE THIS SHOW.

Mad Have Believed for Nazi Story After Futurist Art Exhibition, Scoffers Assert.

"HOW NEW YORK LOOKS TO ME"

BY PICABIA

The Leading Exponent of the Most Advanced Art Tells How He Sees New York Through His Brain—and Why It Is the Only Cubist City in the World

↑ A sample of American press reviews and caricatures of The Armory Show, including clippings from the *New York Evening Mail*, *New York World*, *Chicago American*, and *Chicago Tribune*.

Oh, yes, the Chase School and the Henri Academy and the Alexander Manufactory will go on doing business at the old stands. Sometimes the dead don't know they're dead—and it's follly to expect them to bury each other.

Here's the point: What's the use of going on breeding little Chases, little Henris and little Alexanders—and little Alexandrines?

Such untrammeled minds as Maeterlinck's and Bernard Shaw's put that question very pointedly years ago, about the time that a surprised photographer—whom I'm too modest to name—was receiving medals from art societies which, if they meant anything, meant that his camera was beating "art" at its own game.

At about this time Oscar Wilde remarked that art begins where imitation ends. Why go on imitating Rembrandt when the truest thing conceivable is that Rembrandt, reincarnated to-day, would be doing things that would put his original efforts to the blush? The Rembrandt of A. D. 1913, like the live painters and sculptors of to-day, would realize that evolution had lifted him out of the clam class into a being with a psychology of his own, and the power of discerning the psychological in other persons and things.

This is what you'll see at the Sixty-ninth Regiment Armory exhibition—all sorts of individual efforts to express with colors and forms individual conceptions of the whole meaning of natural objects.

But, right here a word of warning: Don't adopt the enemy's impudent device of plastering these emancipated artists and their work with labels. It's dangerous. They detest labels. There's the result—the picture; take it or leave it.

If you want to see Matisse, Picasso, Braque, Gleizes—or our American Marin—froth at the mouth, just label 'em along down the line of alleged "Futurist" descent: "Impressionists," "Post Impressionists," "Cubists," "Divisionists," "Exclusivists." Rot! There aren't any such things.

If a name is necessary in writing about these live ones, call them "Revitalizers." That's what they are, the whole bunch. They're breathing the breath of life into an art that is long since dead, but won't believe it. And each is performing that operation according to his own lights.

You can make no systematic analysis of this movement, nor can you classify its methods. There are as many methods as there are men. Colors are combined or juxtaposed; masses are rectangular or vague in outlines; there are curves and spirals, and so on, according to each individual's decision how best to apply his technique to visualize his conceptions.

For example, Picabia gazes upon a crowded Paris boulevard and receives impressions of all that is meant by that scene, which he expresses with an arrangement of color masses that—viewed by themselves in the painting—are mainly cubical in form. Within the arrangement of these angular forms he fixes to his own satisfaction—and for the satisfaction of others whose vision is equal to the emergency—a lifelike representation of a living and moving reality.

Van Gogh's *Young Girl with a Cornflower*—which she holds by its stem in her teeth—represents his effort to express the spirit of the entire lucolic surroundings and life of a girl of that class.

The sculptors, like Brancusi, for example, show a tendency to accentuate a certain feature at the expense of others, for the purpose of revealing the inner spirit of their subject. His portrait of a lady, sculptured in common stone, with its sharply raised eyebrows, is an example. A still more striking one is called *Mademoiselle de Pogany*. In this the extraordinary size of the eyes, with other features hardly indicated, is an attempt to convey the idea of perceptive power.

It is no new discovery—the ideal for which these artists are striving. Socrates described it before our graphic art was out of its swaddling clothes.

In art we have become so used to objects that are superficially familiar that when a painter, striving for the greater ideal, obscures those familiar outlines in his attempt to reveal what he sees and feels within them, people immediately ask: "What does the fellow mean?" What is it all about, anyway?"

How many societies have been organized for the purpose of discovering the "meaning" of Robert Browning's poems? How many volumes have been written to explain the "meaning" of Shakespeare's "Hamlet"? Are not the existence of these societies and those explanatory volumes proof that those creations, although possessing unfamiliar qualities, produce pleasurable emotions?

Are you going to add anything to the pleasure you gain from reading "Hamlet" by reading what "Hamlet" meant to Goethe, to Heine or to George Bernard Shaw? Must you weigh and analyze your pleasures, and try to measure them by comparisons with the pleasure others derive from the same source?

Individual independence, both in expression and in acceptance or rejection of whatever is expressed—that is the first principle of those who are trying to inject some life into the decaying corpse of art.

Hummel's five-finger exercises make him immortal. Beethoven's compositions—which Hummel's exercises enable you to play on the piano—make him immortal. Yet Hummel said Beethoven was a bad pianist, and a worse composer. But when you hear the "Sonata Pathétique" do you care particularly what Hummel, the genius of five-finger exercises, thought about it?

Here, on the walls of "291," just now is a progressive series by John Marin exhibiting the different stages of his final conception of a New York sky-scraper. In the first study the building has quite a familiar look. Then the artist, seeing through the walls, beholds an army of human beings—an agitated mass of men and women actuated by their necessities and aspirations. Presto! the sky-scraper takes on somewhat of its animated contents, it begins to be alive. In the next study it lives and moves; it and its contents are one. Then the living structure contributes some of its life to surrounding objects. Finally the spirit within the whole scene is expressed—as the artist sees it—in a structure of scrolls and vague masses in color that has hardly any resemblance to the original study.

Now Marin—being as obliging as he is earnest and sincere in his art—has tried to explain in words what he is striving to express with his brush. What he says may afford some enlightenment for your readers about what such men are striving to accomplish. Marin says:

"Shall we consider the life of a great city as confined simply to the people and animals in its streets and in its buildings? Are the buildings themselves dead? We have been told somewhere that a work of art is a thing alive. You cannot create a work of art unless the things you behold respond to something within you. Therefore, if these buildings move me, they, too, must have life. Thus the whole city is alive; buildings, people, all are alive, and the more they move me the more I feel them to be alive.

"It is the 'moving of me' that I try to express, so that I may recall the spell I have been under and behold the expression of the different emotions that have been called into being. How am I to express what I feel so that its expression will bring me back under the spell? Shall I copy facts photographically?

"I see great forces at work; great movements; the large buildings and the small buildings; the warring of the great and the small; influences of one mass on another greater or smaller mass. Feelings are aroused which give me the desire to express the reaction of these 'pull forces,' those influences which play with one another; great masses pulling smaller masses, each subject in some degree to the other's power.

"In life all things come under the magnetic influence of other things; the bigger assert themselves strongly, the smaller not so much, but still they assert themselves, and though hidden they strive to be seen and in so doing change their bent and direction.

"While these powers are at work pushing, pulling, sideways, downward, upward, I can hear the sound of their strife and there is great music being played."

"Great music." Why should the advantages of orchestration be monopolized by the art which Bach, Beethoven, Wagner, Richard Strauss and Claude Debussy and their disciples have kept alive?

Go to the coming exhibition at the Sixty-ninth Regiment Armory and see some of the orchestration in colors that will help put life into the dead corpse of painting.

Don't throw stones at the artists whose works you can't square with what you've heard about "Cubism" and other appellative idiocies, or because you still wish to encourage the breeding of more little Chases, little Henris and little Alexanders—and Alexandrines.

Above all, don't ask these exhibitors how they manage to pay their rent. Perhaps they don't, or maybe they get money from home.

Put yourself in an unprejudiced mental attitude, in a receptive mood, and the chances are that you will see a great light.

Remember that what you have been accustomed to call "art" is deader than Rameses. If it is ever restored to life much of the credit will be due to these Picassos, Matisses, Marins, Maurers, Kramers—and the rest of them.

Finally, if you decide that you would rather that art stay dead, then go out with your Kodak and produce some faithful imitations. Good machine work is always preferable to indifferent hand-made products.

International Exhibition of Modern Art [exh. cat.]
Preface
FREDERICK JAMES GREGG
New York, 1913

–

Mr. Arthur B. Davies, President of the Association of American Painters and Sculptors, gave out the following statement on the last day of December, 1912:

"On behalf of the Executive Committee, I desire to explain the general attitude of the Association and especially in regard to the International Exhibition to be held in this city in February and March.

"This is not an institution but an association. It is composed of persons of varying tastes and predilections, who are agreed on one thing, that the time has arrived for giving the public here the opportunity to see for themselves the results of new influences at work in other countries in an art way.

"In getting together the works of the European Moderns, the Society has embarked on no propaganda. It proposes to enter on no controversy with any institution. Its sole object is to put the paintings, sculptures, and so on, on exhibition so that the intelligent may judge for themselves by themselves.

"Of course controversies will arise, just as they have arisen under similar circumstances in France, Italy, Germany and England. But they will not be the result of any stand taken by this Association as such; on the other hand we are perfectly willing to assume full responsibility for providing the opportunity to those who may take one side or the other.

"Any individual expression of opinion contrary to the above is at variance with the official resolutions of this Association."

The wide publicity given to the above in the public press all over the country showed to what an extent it was accepted as a definite and precise expression of the policy and the aims of the Association in its relation to the art of Europe and to the American public. That policy and those aims remain unchanged.

Anything that can be said further must be but an amplification of the statement. The foreign paintings and sculptures here shown are regarded by the committee of the Association as expressive of the forces which have been at work abroad of late, forces which cannot be ignored because they have had results.

The American artists exhibiting here consider the exhibition as of equal importance for themselves as for the lay public. The less they find their work showing signs of the developments indicated in the Europeans, the more reason they will have to consider whether or not painters and sculptors here have fallen behind through escaping the incidence through distance and for other reasons of the forces that have manifested themselves on the other side of the Atlantic.

Art is a sign of life. There can be no life without change, as there can be no development without change. To be afraid of what is different or unfamiliar, is to be afraid of life. And to be afraid of life is to be afraid of truth, and to be a champion of superstition. This exhibition is an indication that the Association of American Painters and Sculptors is against cowardice even when it takes the form of amiable self-satisfaction.

"Letting in the Light" [excerpt]
FREDERICK JAMES GREGG
Harper's Weekly — New York, 15 February 1913

–

The Exhibition of International Art (February 17 to March 15) was planned to introduce to this public the works of a number of foreign artists, who, though they are well known in Europe, are for the most part but names to New York and America. The method adopted, however, was not to throw our "extreme" contemporaries at the heads of the public, but to show, by a process of selection, from what they had developed. So Ingres was taken as the starting point, the line continuing with Delacroix, Courbet, Corot, Daumier, Puvis de Chavannes, Degas, Renoir, Monet, Sisley, Pissarro, and so down to Cézanne, Gauguin, van Gogh, Matisse, Picasso, and the "Cubists."

Until the present occasion the most that Americans knew, in America, of the "movement" abroad, outside some few examples shown at certain small exhibitions here, were the works of certain young men who had gone to France and

become immediately and deliberately, perhaps, sensitive to their new environment. Many of them were but weak imitators. It seemed that it was the extravagance of the new foreign painters and sculptors that affected them, and of that extravagance they were the feeble reflectors, all the strength of the originals having evaporated in the process.

The result was the natural one, the public looked on the productions of these disciples as a joke, and could not be convinced that it had any real or valid reason for its existence. The Association, in bringing over the work of the men so eagerly imitated, wished to allow Americans to see among other things the difference between the substance and the shadow, between what had set a fashion unwittingly and what was merely fashionable. In the case of those who are now really influential there can be no difficulty about comparing a man's early with his later work. It will be found, on comparison, that the change is the result of a certain logical development. Each step has been in a definite direction and follows the one before. It was not a case of "going somebody one better," or intended to cause surprise or even astonishment. If there was an explanation offered, though it might not explain, at any rate it gave people something to think about.

It was found by Mr. Davies and Mr. Kuhn, the committee of the Association of American Painters and Sculptors which was sent abroad to select works for the New York exhibition, that most of the German Post-Impressionists were adapters, the result being that very little of what they had done had any real significance. A German of Cologne, speaking of the tendency of his fellow-countrymen, said that they were becoming "ultra-intellectual" as distinguished from "ultra-intelligent"; that they went so far, deliberately, as to make their work "sickly." As for the English advanced men, or so-called advanced men, with certain notable exceptions, their work did not exhibit much force or show real development, which is the reason why they are not more widely represented.

At the same time there are British painters and sculptors not shown here who ought to be here. But, owing to the shortness of time, all committees, foreign as well as American, found it impossible to cover the field. This is why, for instance, the Russian Modernists, who are affected by the naïve folk-art of the empire, are not shown.

As for the "system" followed in selecting works, it is to be kept in mind that the entire exhibition is the result of a plan of the committee. It decided to go out and find American and foreign art that it considered suitable to its purpose. This it did. But it also had to consider American work that it had not invited, in cases where artists asked to have their paintings and sculptures inspected. It is to be observed that this is a very different matter from sending out a general invitation for works which would have to be dealt with by a regular jury. In fact, the Association might put it this way: "This is our show—we have a special purpose in view in arranging it. We did not try to put so many pictures on view, or wish to give an opportunity to exhibit to this, that, or the other person. We desired to give our public the chance to see what has been going on abroad, as it is important for us to know to what extent we have not come under the influences of the period, whatever they may be." ...

"Chronological Chart Made by Arthur B. Davies Showing the Growth of Modern Art"
ARTHUR B. DAVIES
Arts and Decoration — New York, March 1913
–

CLASSICISTS	REALISTS	ROMANTICISTS
Ingres	Courbet	Delacroix
Corot	Manet	Daumier
Puvis de Chavannes	Monet	Redon
Degas	Sisley	Renoir
Seurat	Pissarro	
	Signac	
	Cassatt	
	Lautrec	
	Morisot	
Cézanne	Cézanne	
Gauguin		Van Gogh
Matisse		Gauguin

POST-IMPRESSIONISTS	
Cubists	Futurists
Picasso (classic)	(feeble realists)

"A Layman's Views of an Art Exhibition"
THEODORE ROOSEVELT
Outlook — New York, 22 March 1913
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The recent "International Exhibition of Modern Art" in New York was really noteworthy. Messrs. Davies, Kuhn, Gregg, and their fellow-members of the Association of American Painters and Sculptors have done a work of very real value in securing such an exhibition of the works of both foreign and native painters and sculptors. Primarily their purpose was to give the public a chance to see what has recently been going on abroad. No similar collection of the works of European "moderns" has ever been exhibited in this country. The exhibitors are quite right as to the need of showing to our people in this manner the art forces which of late have been at work in Europe, forces which cannot be ignored.

This does not mean that I in the least accept the view that these men take of the European extremists whose pictures are here exhibited. It is true, as the champions of these extremists say, that there can be no life without change, no development without change, and that to be afraid of what is different or unfamiliar is to be afraid of life. It is no less true, however, that change may mean death and not life, and retrogression instead of development. Probably we err in treating most of these pictures seriously. It is likely that many of them represent in the painters the astute appreciation of the power to make folly lucrative which the late P. T. Barnum showed with his faked mermaid. There are thousands of people who will pay small sums to look at a faked mermaid; and now and then one of this kind with enough money will buy a Cubist picture, or a picture of a misshapen nude woman, repellent from every standpoint.

In some ways it is the work of the American painters and sculptors which is of most interest in this collection, and a glance at this work must convince anyone of the real good that is coming out of the new movements, fantastic though many of the developments of these new movements are. There was one note entirely absent from the exhibition, and that was the note of the commonplace. There was not a touch of simpering, self-satisfied conventionality anywhere in the exhibition. Any sculptor or painter who had in him something to express and the power of expressing it found the field open to him. He did not have to be afraid because his work was not along ordinary lines. There was no stunting or dwarfing, no requirement that a man whose gift lay in new directions should measure up or down to stereotyped and fossilized standards.

For all this there can be only hearty praise. But this does not in the least mean that the extremists whose paintings and pictures were represented are entitled to any praise, save, perhaps, that they have helped to break fetters. Probably in any reform movement, any progressive movement, in any field of life, the penalty for avoiding the commonplace is a liability to extravagance. It is vitally necessary to move forward and to shake off the dead hand, often the fossilized dead hand, of the reactionaries; and yet we have to face the fact that there is apt to be a lunatic fringe among the votaries of any forward movement. In this recent art exhibition the lunatic fringe was fully in evidence, especially in the rooms devoted to the Cubists and the Futurists, or Near-Impressionists. I am not entirely certain which of the two latter terms should be used in connection with some of the various pictures and representations of plastic art—and, frankly, it is not of the least consequence. The Cubists are entitled to the serious attention of all who find enjoyment in the colored puzzle pictures of the Sunday newspapers. Of course there is no reason for choosing the cube as a symbol, except that it is probably less fitted than any other mathematical expression for any but the most formal decorative art. There is no reason why people should not call themselves Cubists, or Octagonists, Parallelopipedonists, or Knights of the Isosceles Triangle, or Brothers of the Cosine, if they so desire; as expressing anything serious and permanent, one term is as fatuous as another. Take the picture which for some reason is called *A naked man going down stairs*. There is in my bath-room a really good Navajo rug which, on any proper interpretation of the Cubist theory, is a far more satisfactory and decorative picture. Now if, for some inscrutable reason, it suited somebody to call this rug a picture of, say, *A well dressed man going up a ladder*, the name would fit the facts just about as well as in the case of the Cubist picture of the *Naked man going down stairs*. From the standpoint of terminology each name would have whatever merit inheres in a rather cheap straining after effect; and from the standpoint of decorative value, of sincerity, and of artistic merit, the Navajo rug is infinitely ahead of the picture.

As for many of the human figures in the pictures of the Futurists, they show that the school would be better entitled to the name of the "Pastists." I was interested to find that a man of scientific attainments who had likewise looked at the pictures had been struck, as I was, by their resemblance to the later work of the paleolithic artists of the French and Spanish caves. There are interesting samples of the strivings for the representation of the human form among artists of many different countries and times, all in the same stage of paleolithic culture, to be found in a recent number of the "Revue d'Ethnographie." The paleolithic artist was able to portray the bison, the mammoth, the reindeer, and the horse with spirit and success, while he still stumbled painfully in the effort to portray man. This stumbling effort in his case represented progress, and he was entitled to great credit for it. Forty thousand years later, when entered into artificially and deliberately, it represents only a smirking pose of retrogression, and is not praiseworthy. So with much of the sculpture. A family group of precisely the merit that inheres in a structure made of the wooden blocks in a nursery is not entitled to be reproduced in marble. Admirers speak of the kneeling female figure by Lehmbruck—I use "female" advisedly, for although obviously mammalian it is not especially human—as "full of lyric grace," as "tremendously sincere," and "of a jewel-like preciousness." I am not competent to say whether these words themselves represent sincerity or merely a conventional jargon; it is just as easy to be conventional about the fantastic as about the commonplace. In any event one might as well speak of the "lyric grace" of a praying mantis, which adopts much of the same attitude; and why a deformed pelvis should be called "sincere," or a tibia of giraffe-like length "precious," is a question of pathological rather than artistic significance. This figure and the absurd portrait head of some young lady have the merit that inheres in extravagant caricature. It is a merit, but it is not a high merit. It entitles these pieces to stand in sculpture where nonsense rhymes stand in literature and the sketches of Aubrey Beardsley in pictorial art. These modern sculptured caricatures in no way approach the gargoyles of Gothic cathedrals, probably because the modern artists are too self-conscious and make themselves ridiculous by pretentiousness. The makers of the gargoyles knew very well that the gargoyles did not represent what was most important in the Gothic cathedrals. They stood for just a little point of grotesque reaction against, and relief from, the tremendous elemental vastness and grandeur of the Houses of God. They were imps, sinister and comic, grim and yet futile, and they fitted admirably into the framework of the theology that found its expression in the towering and wonderful piles which they ornamented.

Very little of the work of the extremists among the European "moderns" seems to be good in and for itself; nevertheless it has certainly helped any number of American artists to do work that is original and serious; and this is not only in painting but in sculpture. I wish the exhibition had contained some of the work of the late Marcius Symonds; very few people knew or cared for it while he lived; but not since Turner has there been another man on whose canvas glowed so much of that unearthly "light that never was on land or sea." But the exhibition contained so much of extraordinary merit that it is ungrateful even to mention an omission. To name the pictures one would like to possess—and the bronzes and tanagras and plasters—would mean to make a catalogue of indefinite length. One of the most striking pictures was the *Terminal Yards*—the seeing eye was there, and the cunning hand. I should like to mention all the pictures of the President of the Association, Arthur B. Davies. As first-class decorative work of an entirely new type, the very unexpected pictures of Sheriff Bob Chanler have a merit all their own. The *Arizona Desert*, the *Canadian Night*, the group of girls on the roof of a New York tenement-house, the studies in the Bronx Zoo, the *Heracles*, the studies for the Utah monument, the little group called *Gossip* which has something of the quality of the famous Fifteenth Idyl of Theocritus, the *Pelf*, with its grim suggestiveness—these, and a hundred others, are worthy of study, each of them; I am naming at random those which at the moment I happen to recall. I am not speaking of the acknowledged masters, of Whistler, Puvis de Chavannes, Monet; nor of John's children; nor of Cézanne's old woman with a rosary; nor of Redon's marvelous color pieces—a worthy critic should speak of these. All I am trying to do is to point out why a layman is grateful to those who arranged this exhibition.

"The Picture Show"
HUTCHINS HAPGOOD
New York Globe – March 1913

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The art exhibition at the armory is over, leaving in the minds of many of us a lively regret that the four weeks could not have been extended to as many months. In my case, at any rate, every visit of the half dozen I was able to make startled my imagination going in fresh channels. Indeed, there are very few pictures in this exhibition which, whether good or bad from the point of view of beauty, as of relationship with the best development of art, do not at any rate serve a suggestive purpose. Many of them are like notes, tentative, hesitating, beckoning, or hinting. Notes, no matter if they do not come to full realization, are not likely to be dull. There is always hope for a note, for a suggestion.

And, of course, there is much more than the suggestion sketch in this exhibition. There are a very large number of successful works of art there, and many of them are works of art in the most vital sense. They enhance the lives of many people. They stir the emotions and make us see things in nature and in human nature that we have not seen before. As a friend said to me, when we were looking at the pictures together: "This is more than a picture show." And one can learn here not only about art but about everything. It stirs us to think about politics and industry and social relations and human values, fills us with a wonder as to whether we may not be keener about all those things than we have been, whether we have not been sunk in a dogmatic slumber."

Soon after the opening of this exhibition I wrote an article called "Life at the Armory," in which I said that the thing that stood out boldly was the vitality of the thing as a whole. One was struck with the fact that life was there, rather than art. And my first impression remains stronger than ever. The intense things about this whole affair of four weeks has been the life, the vitality of it, the suggestiveness, the discussion, the general interest.

An artist told me on my last visit that this exhibition was the only event that had ever made him want to live fifty years longer. We had been talking of the really wonderful way in which the public had responded; the vital way. The intelligent crowds that had taken these painted canvases as life messages. Thousands of persons had approached these silent things as if they were human temperaments, expressing their passionate convictions about experience. They wanted to understand what these artists were feeling and thinking. They were not talking about the technical art. They were talking about what the artists meant to say about life.

And the artist who wanted to live fifty years longer, was moved by the sudden realization that the public would respond to anything that is alive, even if it is art. He had his doubt of the crowd removed, shattered. He has been made to realize that the only reason that art is limited in its appeal is that, as a rule, there is not enough life in it.

To move about in those armory crowds and see the eager, vital faces, the range of types, the curiosity, and the intelligence; the way in which the people merged into the pictures, as it were, communicated with them, argued with them, compared life notes with them—this, indeed, made one hopeful, made one expectant of all good things to come, made one trust democracy and realize that the people will take even the best, if there is life in it. They are gloriously uninterested in technical perfection. No matter how perfectly a painter observes the rules, this does not interest anybody except the deadly academic and the academically dead.

So-called artists have complained that the people are not interested in art. What they ought to say is that the people are not interested in death. Most of our exhibitions have been huge morgues in which stiffened corpses have been shown in decorous and decent fashion. But give the people life in art, and they like it, no matter how indecent, indecorous, lawless, imperfect it may be.

There is a well-grounded distrust of the half-educated, of the half-experienced, of the half-civilized. Artists who hate the middle-class, the "bourgeoisie," hate it because it is "half." Authority in art is bad for that reason. Authority in morality and taste generally is bad for the same reason. It is only half-lived, half-felt. This is the trouble with our Academy, with our respectability, with our reform. They represent rules for and by people who do not understand fully the meaning of life. And the vital public is rightly bored. It wants life and this pseudo-culture gives them death instead.

That is why a return to the primitive, to the simple, to the directly material, to crude contact with nature, is so refreshing. It is inspiring to break through, not law but rules. Indeed, breaking rules and regulations often means, and always ought to mean, getting back to law, to fundamental, natural law. We want now to break through the rules of our school system in order to get more fully in touch with vital education. Breaking rules in favor of fundamental law is the process of all real reform.

In this armory show there is evident this exciting demand to come again into the life of art—to feel the fundamental functions of art, which is an expression of life in form. The factor of destruction, of rebellion, of revolt, of lawlessness is only an attempt to break through rules for the sake of law, to return to first principles, to the form instinct, to the instinct for form.

Of course there is always in such a renaissance movement grotesque abuses. Some artists do not see or feel the fact that revolt is not for its own sake, but only a by-product of simplicity, reality, independence and courage. So in this show there is an element of the grotesque and the extravagant without life. But this does not determine the main effect of the exhibition, which is a vital, restless attempt to bring art back to life—to instinct, to feeling, to expression, to personality.

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0.10
The Last Futurist Exhibition of Pictures

Petrograd, 1915

LOCATION AND DATES
Dobychina Gallery, Adamini House, Field of Mars No. 7, Petrograd (St. Petersburg), 19 December 1915–19 January 1916

CURATORS
Ivan Puni, Xenia Boguslavskaya

ITINERARY
None

ARTISTS
Natan Altman, Xenia Boguslavskaya, Valentin Kamensky, A. M. Kirillova, Ivan Kliun, Kasimir Malevich, Mikhail Menkov, Vera Pestel, Liubov Popova, Ivan Puni, Olga Rozanova, Vladimir Tatlin, Nadezhda Udaltsova, Maria Vasilyeva

EXHIBITION CATALOG
0.10: The Last Futurist Exhibition of Pictures. Statement by Kasimir Malevich. Petrograd: 1915.

RELATED PUBLICATIONS
From Cubism to Suprematism in Art, to the New Realism of Painting, to Absolute Creation, exhibition handout by Kasimir Malevich, Petrograd: L. Ya. Ganzburg Publishing, 1915; Suprematist manifesto with statements by Xenia Boguslavskaya, Ivan Kliun, Kasimir Malevich, Mikhail Menkov, and Ivan Puni, 1915; *Vladimir Evgrafovich Tatlin*, pamphlet with unsigned text, Petrograd: New Review for All, 17 December 1915.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
Number of artists: 14
Number of works: c. 155
Total attendance: c. 6,000

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The subtitle of "0.10"—"The Last Futurist Exhibition of Pictures"—recalls the longtime goal of the Russian avant-garde to produce artworks free of European precedent. Although acknowledging a connection with Futurism, and implicitly with Cubism, this was to be the last such exhibition and thus would move beyond the accomplishments of Paris, where so many of the Russian artists had studied. From the neo-Primitivist paintings of the first "Knave of Diamonds" (1910) and "Donkey's Tail" (1912) exhibitions in Moscow to the radical *zaum* poetry of Velimir Khlebnikov and the 1913 St. Petersburg production of the opera *Victory over the Sun*, Russian artists had sought to create works both unique and uniquely Russian. It was in the work of Kasimir Malevich and Vladimir Tatlin—both the protagonists and antagonists of "0.10"—that this dream came to fruition.

"0.10" (Zero–Ten) was structured by the personal animosity between Malevich and Tatlin, who showed their work separately and split the exhibition's artists into two camps. Malevich created one of the best-known installations of the century, with an asymmetrical hanging of works that emanated from the shocking *Black Square*, 1915. Set in a corner just below the ceiling, in the traditional position of the icon in a Russian home, his black form—read by both press and public as a symbol of nihilism—deployed the religious association of its location to suggest Malevich's quest to overcome the material world of three dimensions through a new form of consciousness. Tatlin, on the other hand, aggressively embraced materiality. Showing alongside Liubov Popova and Nadezhda Udaltsova in a room he labeled "Exhibition of Professional Painters," he set up his *Corner Counter-Reliefs*. Abstract constructions that were also installed in the icon-associated corners, these radical sculptures of curved sheet metal and rigging elegantly displayed the physical properties of the materials from which they were made. Yet the implications of what these two artists had done would be seen only after the Russian Revolution of 1917, when members of the prewar avant-garde decorated public places, assumed control of the art schools, and began, before the repression of the 1920s, to move Constructivist aesthetics into factories and workshops.

← Dobychina Gallery, Adamini House, Field of Mars No. 7, Petrograd. Built in 1825, the gallery of Nadezhda E. Dobychina, located on the second floor of the Adamini House, was one of the few private galleries in Petrograd to exhibit and sell advanced art. It overlooked the Field of Mars, a vast public park and square in the center of the city.

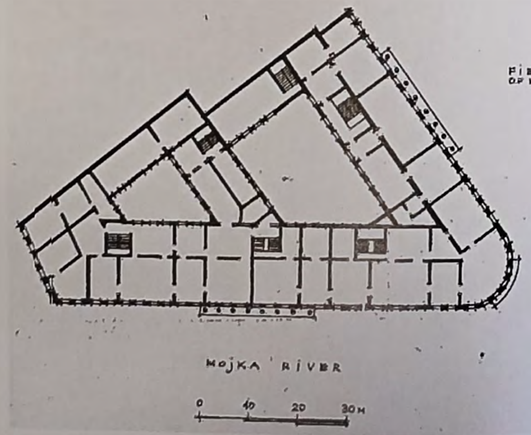
↓ Floor plan, Dobychina Gallery. The exact rooms in which the exhibition took place are unknown.

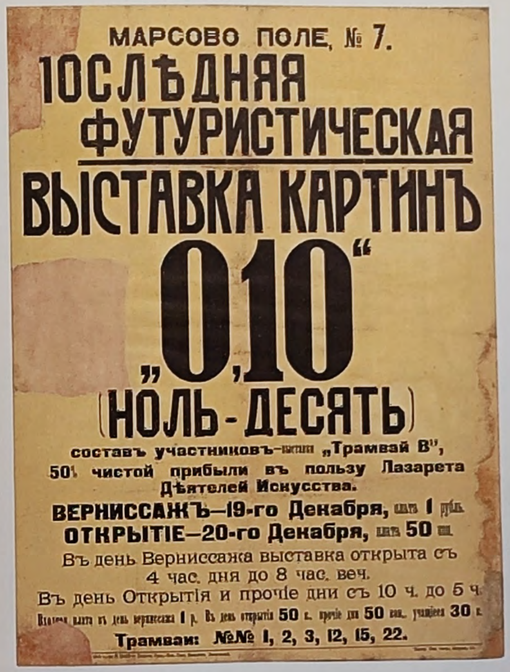
Мѣсто выхода

дата X1 №2

— Сезонъ футуризма въ этомъ году начнется открытіемъ 19-го сего декабря выставки картинъ на Марсовомъ полѣ. (въ помѣщеніи Добычиной). Выставка (уже имѣетъ названіе «Послѣдней футуристической», такъ какъ будутъ выставлены произведенія совершенно новаго характера. Будутъ выпущены соотвѣтствующія «декларація», обосновывающія новое теченіе въ искусствѣ, идущее на смѣну уже «вчерашняго» футуризма. Участники выставки—тѣ же, что и въ прошломъ году, къ присоединенію «Трамвай В»—гг. Кончаловскій, Экстеръ, Шухъ, Малевичъ, Клюнъ и нѣк. друг.

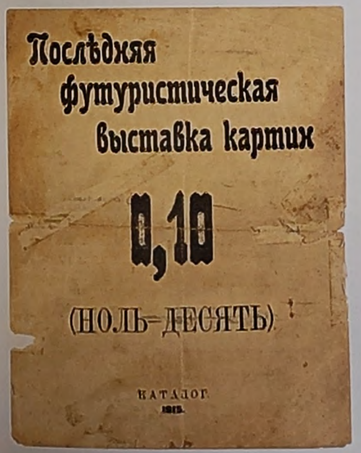
↑ Announcement for "0.10: The Last Futurist Exhibition of Pictures," unknown publication, stamped 23 November 1915. This text reads, "The Futurist season closes this year with the opening of an exhibition of paintings round mid-December—at the Field of Mars (in the Dobychina Gallery)."

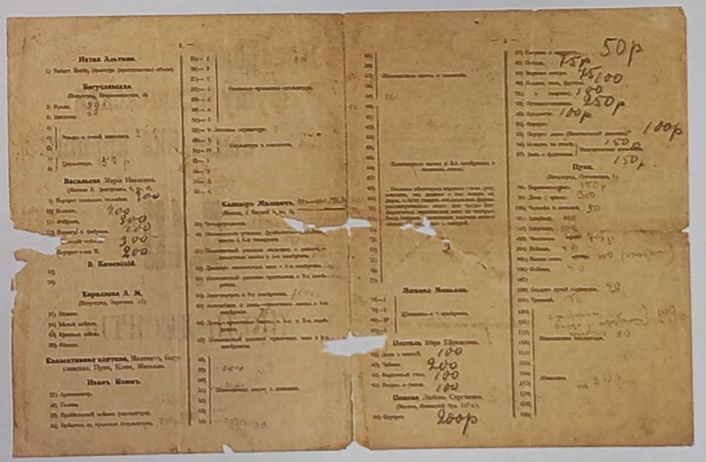




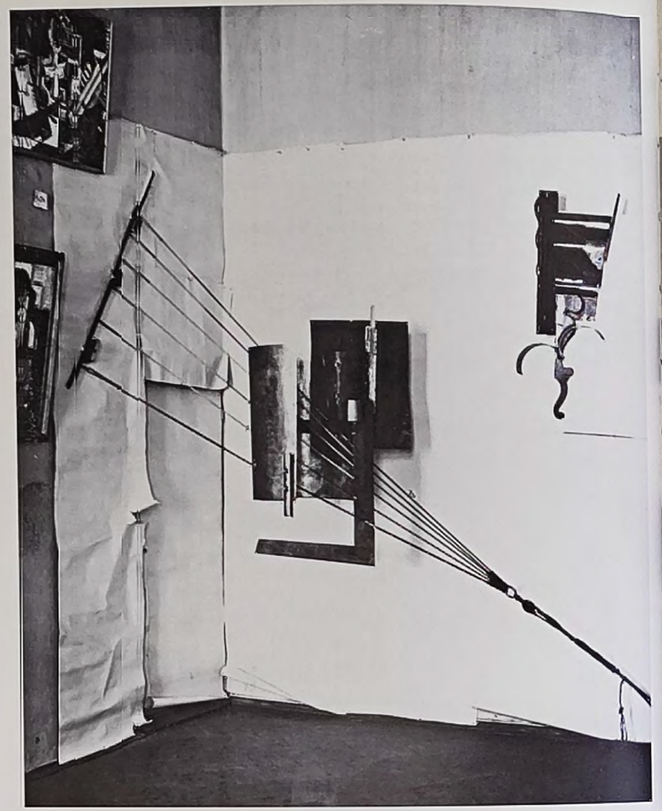
← Poster for "0.10," designed by participating artist Ivan Puni. The poster announces the opening night on 19 December 1915, with an entry fee of one ruble. It also mentions that the exhibition will include participants from "Tramway V: The First Futurist Exhibition of Pictures," another Puni-organized show that took place in March 1915, several months prior to "0.10."

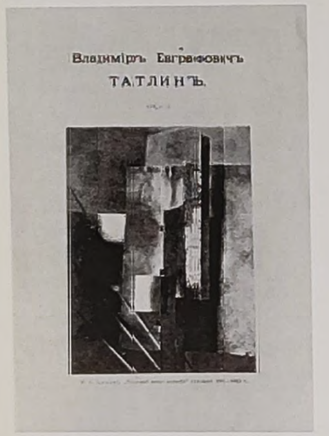
↙ ↓ Cover and spread from the catalog for "0.10: The Last Futurist Exhibition of Pictures." The catalog lists 154 works by 14 artists plus an unnumbered collective work by Kasimir Malevich, Xenia Boguslavskaya, Puni, Ivan Klium, and Mikhail Menkov. The only artist statement in the catalog comes from Malevich, next to catalog no. 68: "In naming certain pictures—I do not wish to show that I have regarded real forms as heaps of formless painterly masses out of which a painterly picture was created having nothing in common with the model."





→ Wladimir Tatlin exhibited 13 works in a room he titled "Exhibition of Professional Painters,' including a *Corner (Counter-Relief)* (center) and an unidentified relief (right). This *Corner Counter-Relief* was reproduced in Tatlin's pamphlet, available at the exhibition (below). Also shown in this room were two unidentified paintings often attributed to Vera Pestell, Liubov Popova, or Nadezhda Udaltsova (far left).





Владиміръ Евграфовичъ

ТАТЛИНЪ.

ВЛАДИМІРЪ ЕВГРАФОВИЧЪ ТАТЛИНЪ.

Родился въ 1885 году въ Москвѣ. Въ 1910 году окончилъ художественное училище. Съ 1909 года выставлялся. Въ печати выступалъ, какъ отвлекая работы (живопись, скульптура, декоръ и пр.) на выставкахъ выставляетъ:

„Бубновый валетъ".
„Міръ Искусства".
„Союзъ молодежи".
„Салонъ Добычиной 1914 г."
„Выставка Давленко 1915 года".

С 1914 года работаетъ также архитектурой и живописью, также и выставляетъ свои работы въ выставочныхъ залахъ Петербурга и Москвы.

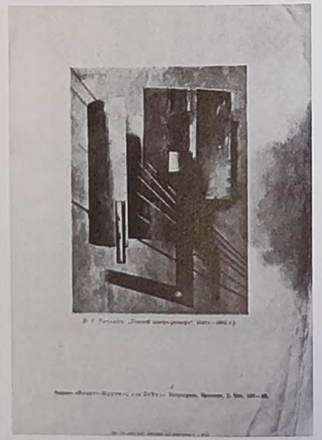
Изъ произведеній, не выставленныхъ на выставкѣ, но имѣющихся въ мастерской, за исключеніемъ работъ, находящихся въ музеяхъ и частныхъ собраніяхъ:

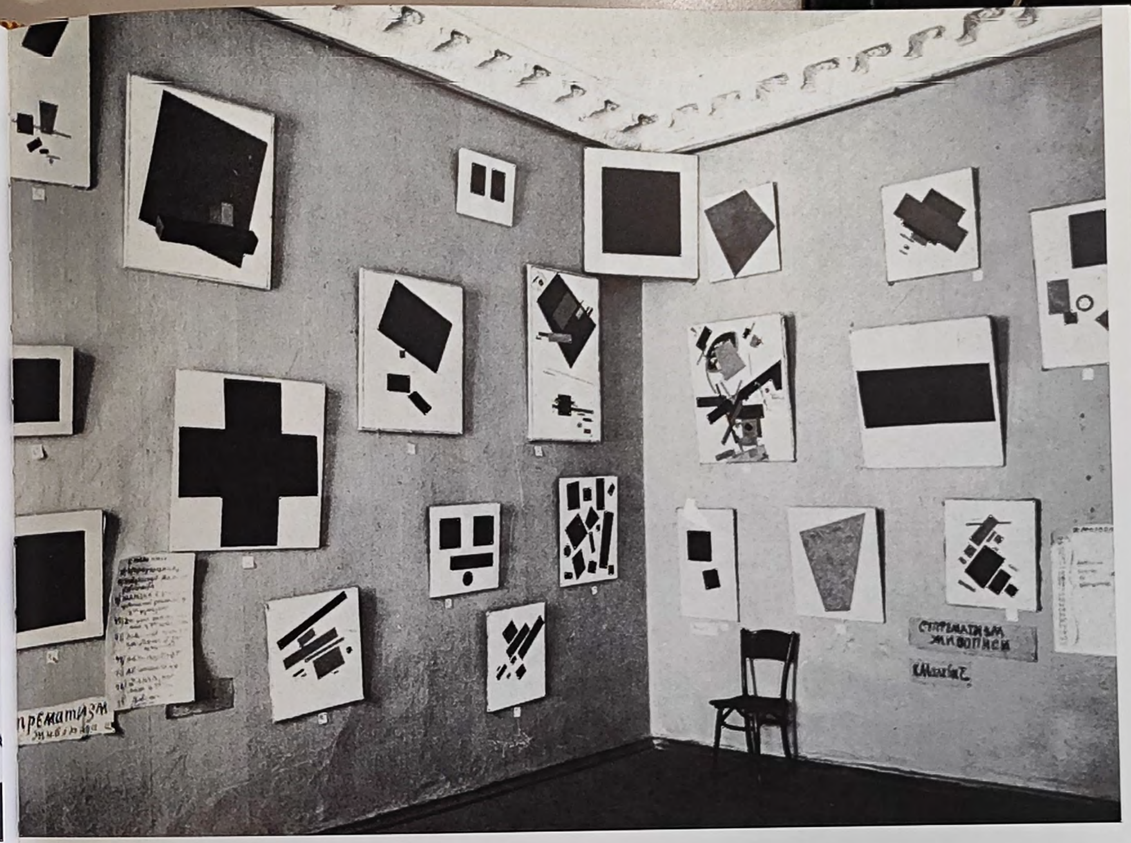
Въ противо-грузинахъ не принимаетъ участія и не принадлежитъ.

Въ литературномъ отношеніи 1913—14 г. отрицалъ самостоятельную выставку, считая работу вещь мастеровъ, „Второй выставки живописныхъ реалистовъ" (Москва, Сентябрь 13).

Въ работѣ его входили материалы: дерево, металлъ, стекло, штукатурка, картонъ, веревки, гудронъ и пр., которые онъ считалъ матеріалъ обрабатывалъ инженеръ, руководясь, какими требованіями онъ выдвигалъ въ другихъ областяхъ.

Въ 1913 году въ выставочной Татлинъ интересовалъ больше „Угловой контръ-рельефъ", который онъ представилъ своей выставкѣ на „Послѣдней футуристической выставкѣ" въ Петербургѣ.





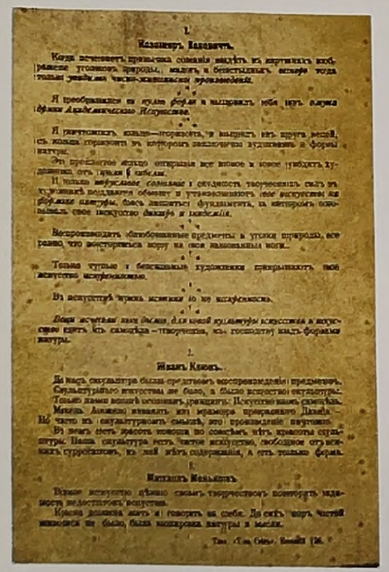
← Cover and spreads from Tatlin's pamphlet, 17 December 1915. Distributed at "0.10" and also pinned to the wall next to one of Tatlin's reliefs, this small publication reproduces *Corner Counter-Relief* on the cover and on page four. The interior spread includes images of two *Painterly Reliefs* and a sketch for *Corner Counter-Relief*. Although unsigned, the text is presumed to have been written by Tatlin and edited by Udaltsova. It consists of a brief biography, his exhibition history, a list of materials used to create the reliefs, and the following declaration about Tatlin: "He has never belonged and does not belong to Tatlinism, Rayonism, Futurism, the Wanderers, or any other group."

↑ The room dedicated to Malevich included at least 21 of the 39 works he submitted to the exhibition. Malevich titled his room "Suprematism in Painting" (lower left) and included this sign and another reading "K. Malevich" on the wall (lower right). *Black Square* hung near the ceiling at the intersection of adjacent walls—the traditional position of the icon in Russian homes. Pinned to the wall below each work was its corresponding catalog number.

← Suprematist artists (left to right): Olga Rozanova, Xenia Boguslavskaya, and Kasimir Malevich. Partial views of three works by Malevich can be seen in the background.

← Distributed free of charge at the exhibition, the two-page Suprematist manifesto includes statements by Malevich, Ivan Kliun, and Mikhail Menkov on the first page and the second page consists of a joint statement by Ivan Puni and Boguslavskaya. In addition to the manifesto, Malevich wrote an extensive article titled *From Cubism to Suprematism in Art, to the New Realism of Painting, to Absolute Creation*, published in the form of a handout and sold at "0.10." (Selected translations, pp. 179–80.)

↓ Poster for a conference organized by Suprematists Puni and Malevich, Tenisheva Art School, Petrograd, 12 January 1916. In what was billed as "an experimental demonstration," Puni and Malevich delivered lectures, displayed paintings, and executed drawings from nature according to the principles of Cubo-Futurism. Boguslavskaya read her poetry.



Концертный зал Тенишевскаго Училища
НЕЖДАНОВСКАЯ, 22.

Во Вторник, 12 Января, в 8 час. веч.,

ПУБЛИЧНАЯ НАУЧНО-ПОПУЛЯРНАЯ ЛЕКЦІЯ

СУПРЕМАТИСТОВ

К. МАЛЕВИЧА И ПУНИ

КУБИЗМ И ФУТУРИЗМ

СУПРЕМАТИЗМ

О ПОСЛѢДНЕЙ ФУТУРИСТИЧЕСКОЙ ВЫСТАВКѢ КАРТИН 0,10

Опытное демонстриров. с натуры рисунка по принципу кубо-футуризма К. Малевичем.

Лекцію Пуни прочтет в присутствіи автора г-жа Богуславская.

Прочтет свои стихи г-жа К. Богуславская.

ПРОГРАММА ЛЕКЦІИ ПУНИ.

Импрессионизм в живописи. Символизм.
Декадентство поэзіи. Кубо-футуризм.
Красота в экспрес-. Условность реализма.
сивизм. Неопримитивизм.
Футуризм. Школа Пикассо.
Итальянский футуризм. Супрематизм и кубизм футуризма.

ПРОГРАММА ЛЕКЦІИ К. МАЛЕВИЧА.

Полное изложение и исчезнов. Алгебра и перспектива.
Натурализм XIX в. 3-й путь Кризисы в живописи.
[illegible]
Пережитки кубо-футуризма. Цвет и Об.
Новый реализм в живописи. Алгебра и поэзія.

25% чистой прибыли поступает в Лазарет Дѣятелей Искусства. Подробности в программах

Билеты от 3 р. 50 к. до 50 к., продаются в кассѣ зала по вечерам [illegible]

From Cubism to Suprematism in Art, to the New Realism of Painting, to Absolute Creation
[exh. handout, excerpt]
KASIMIR MALEVICH
Petrograd, 1915

–

Space is a receptacle
without dimension into
which the intellect
puts its creation.
May I also put in my
creative form.

All former and contemporary painting before Suprematism, and sculpture, the word, and music were enslaved by the form of nature, and they await their liberation in order to speak in their own tongue and not depend upon the intellect, sense, logic, philosophy, psychology, the various laws of causality and technical changes in life.

That was the time of Babel in art.

The art of painting, sculpture, the word, was up until now, a camel loaded with all kinds of rubbish and odalisques, with Egyptian and Persian kings, with Solomons, Salomes, princes, princesses and their favorite little dogs, with desire, and the fornication of Venuses.

Up until now there were no attempts at painting as such, without any attribute of real life.

Painting was a necktie on the starched shirt of a gentleman and a pink corset holding in the swollen stomach of a fat lady.

Painting was the esthetic side of a thing, but it never was original and an end in itself. Artists were legal investigators, police officials who composed various reports about spoiled produce, burglaries, murders and homeless tramps.

Artists were also lawyers, cheerful storytellers, psychologists, botanists, zoologists, archeologists, and engineers, but there were no artist-creators.

Our Itinerants used to paint pots on fences in Little Russia and tried to convey the philosophy of weaklings.

The youth closer to us were occupied with pornography and turned painting into sensual, lascivious rubbish.

There was not the realism of painting as an end in itself, there was not creation. One cannot even count the idealization of Greek statues, there there was only the desire to improve a subjective "I."

Neither can one count pictures where there is exaggeration of real forms, but also copies of nature: icons, Giotto, Gauguin, etc.

Creation is present in pictures only where there is form which borrows nothing already created in nature, but arises out of the painted masses without repeating and without altering the primary forms of the objects of nature.

Futurism, having forbid the painting of female hams and the copying of portraits, removed perspective, too.

But even it introduced the prohibition not in the name of the emancipation of painting from those principles already mentioned—the Renaissance, antiquities, etc.—but because of the change in the technical side of existence.

The new iron, machine life, the roar of automobiles, flash of searchlights, growl of propellers, awakened the soul which was snoring as it suffocated in the cellar of its enumerated mistakes.

The dynamism of movement suggested the idea of promoting dynamism in the plastic art of painting also.

But the effort of Futurism to convey a pure painted plasticity as such was not crowned with success; it was not able to part with objectness in general, and only broke up the objects for the sake of achieving dynamism.

And the latter was achieved when the intellect was half expelled, the old corn of the habit of seeing objects as entities and tirelessly comparing them with nature.

But the fact that in the picture the construction of things going by is intended to transmit an impression of a state of motion in nature, moves the goal of achieving a pure painted plasticity in Futurism still further away.

Once such a task is set up, operation with real forms to obtain the impression is unavoidable.

But, nevertheless, Cubo-Futurism on its face, the breach of the integrity of objects, their breaking and truncation, hastens the annihilation of objectness in creative art.

The Cubo-Futurists assembled everything onto a square and broke them up, but didn't burn them up. Too bad!

They took painting out of the fashion shops, the dry goods and perfumers shops, and dressed it in our machine and ferro-concrete age.

The unusual strength of unreal objects, their rapid changing, surprised the Futurists, and they began to look for a means of transmitting the modern condition of life.

The very construction of a picture arose from finding points on the plane where the position of real things at their rupture or encounter would convey the time of greatest speed.

Locating these points may be accomplished at will, independent of the physical law of naturalness and perspective.

Therefore we see in Futurist pictures images of smoke, clouds, sky, horses, automobiles and various other objects in positions and places which do not correspond to nature.

And the condition of objects became more important than their essence and sense.

We saw an extremely unusual picture. The new order of objects forced the intellect to shudder and critics threw themselves like dogs from under a gate upon the artists.

Shame on them!

And enormous strength of will was needed to violate all the rules and to strip the coarsened skin from the soul of Academism and to spit in the face of common sense.

Good for them!

But while they are rejecting intellect and advancing intuition and the unconscious, at the same time Cubo-Futurists in their pictures are using forms created by the intellect for its own end.

Intuition could not express all the unconscious in the real aspect of particular forms.

In the art of the Futurists we see all the forms of real life, and if they are situated in inappropriate places, then this is done not subconsciously, but has its lawful, conscious justification in eliciting an impression of the chaos of movement in modern life.

Intuition was only able to find a new beauty in objects already created (Cubism).

Intellect, purpose, and consciousness are higher than intuition. They create a completely new form out of nothing, or perfect a primary form. From a two-wheeled cart to the locomotive, the automobile, the airplane.

While to the intuitive feeling is ascribed a higher ability to prophesy and to anticipate time.

A feeling that draws into real life the ever newer and newer from some unconscious void.

In art there is no proof of this. Intuition tried to find the new, the esthetic, only in already created things.

Intellectual creation is preceded by purpose and its means is self-consciousness.

But intuitive creation is unconscious and does not have purpose and an exact answer.

Futurist pictures do not vindicate that which the construction of the picture, the calculation of the order or the problem of the arrangement of things, tries to prove.

If we take any point in a picture we will find in it a retreating or approaching thing, or a contained colored space.

But we will not find the main thing, a painted form as such.

The element of painting here is nothing more than the outer clothing of the given thing.

And the size of the painting was given by how large a form was needed for its own purpose, and not vice-versa.

By advancing in pictures a painted plastic dynamism as something new, without abolishing objectiness, the Futurist picture was reduced to 1/20 without losing its strength of motion.

It seems to me that it is necessary to convey purely colored motion in such a way that the picture cannot lose a single one of its colors. Motion, the running of a horse, a locomotive, can be conveyed by a monotoned pencil drawing, but not the motion of red, green, and blue masses.

Therefore one must turn directly to the painted masses as such, and look in them for the forms inherent to them.

In Futurism we meet mainly an appeal to objects and an operating with them, which must be given up for the sake of the pure creation in painting of new creative forms.

Dynamism in painting is only painted masses rioting towards an exit out of the thing to self-characteristic forms which do not mean anything, i.e., to the rule of purely self-sufficient painted forms over the intelligent, to Suprematism and to the new realism in painting. . . .

The creative will up to now has been squeezed into the real forms of life. And deformity is the struggle of the creative power, out from the misery of confinement. This creative power, will, I call A.B. Abism in art, the safeguarding self-sufficiency of every art, whose forms will be a new revelation—of a painted realism of masses, of materials, of stone, iron and other things.

Thus, for example, the human form is not intrinsic in a block of marble. Michelangelo in sculpting David did violence to the marble, he mutilated a piece of good stone. It didn't become marble, it became David.

And he erred deeply if he said that he drew David out of the marble.

The ruined marble was defiled first by the thought of Michelangelo about David whom he squeezed into the stone and then set free like a splinter from a foreign body.

One must extract from marble those forms which could arise out from its own body, and a carved cube or other form is more valuable than any David.

The same in painting, the word, music.

The striving of the artistic powers to direct art along the path of intellect produced a zero of creativity. Even in the very strongest ones there are real forms: distortion.

Distortion was brought almost to the moment of vanishing by the strongest, but it didn't exceed the bounds of zero.

But I have transformed myself into a zero of form and gone beyond "0" to "1."

Believing that Cubo-Futurism has fulfilled its tasks, I am crossing over to Suprematism, to the new realism in painting, to objectless creation.

In time I will say more about Suprematism, painting, sculpture and the dynamics of musical masses.

—

From Charlotte Douglas, Swans of Other Worlds: Kazimir Malevich and the Origins of Abstraction in Russia *(Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1980), 107–10. Translation by Charlotte Douglas.*

Suprematist Manifesto

[exh. handout, excerpt]

KASIMIR MALEVICH, IVAN KLIUN, AND MIKHAIL MENKOV

Petrograd, December 1915

—

KASIMIR MALEVICH

Only when the conscious habit of seeing nature's little nooks, Madonnas, and Venuses in pictures disappears *will we witness a purely painterly work of art.*

I have transformed myself in the *zero of form* and have fished myself out of the *rubbishy slough of academic art.*

I have destroyed the ring of the horizon and go out of the circle of objects, the horizon ring that has imprisoned the artist and the forms of nature.

This accursed ring, by continually revealing novelty after novelty, leads the artist away from the *aim of destruction.*

And only *cowardly consciousness* and insolvency of creative power in an artist yield to this deception and establish *their art on the forms of nature,* afraid of losing the foundation on which the *savage and the academy* have based their art.

To produce favorite objects and little nooks of nature is just like a thief being enraptured by his shackled legs.

Only dull and impotent artists veil their work with *sincerity.* Art requires *truth,* not *sincerity.*

Objects have vanished like smoke; to attain the new artistic culture, art advances toward creation as an end in itself and toward domination over the forms of nature.

IVAN KLIUN

Before us sculpture was a means of reproducing objects.

There was no sculptural art, but there was the art of sculpture.

Only we have become fully aware of the principle: Art as an end in itself.

Michelangelo carved a beautiful David out of marble—but in a purely sculptural sense this work is insignificant.

In it is the beauty of youth, but no beauty of sculpture. Our sculpture is pure art, free from any surrogates; there is no content in it, only form.

MIKHAIL MENKOV

Every art that is valued by its ability to repeat the visible is a defective art.

Color must live and speak for itself. Hitherto there was no such thing as pure painting; there were just copies of nature and of ideas. . . .

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From John E. Bowlt, ed., Russian Art of the Avant-Garde: Theory and Criticism, 1902–1934 *(New York: Viking Press, 1976), 114–16. Translation by John E. Bowlt.*

→ Feature on "0.10," *Ogonek,* 3 January 1916. This Petrograd illustrated journal reproduces individual works included in the exhibition (left to right): Ivan Kliun's *Cubist at Her Dressing Table,* Olga Rozanova's *Bicyclist* (above) and *Automobile* (below), Ivan Puni's *The Hairdresser* (above) and *Window Dressing* (below).

↓ Press clipping from an unknown Russian publication showing Kasimir Malevich's installation, c. December 1915. Below the photograph, the caption reads: "Mr. Malevich has stepped over the white elephants to arrive in the fourth dimension entirely under his own steam. What Mr. Malevich's 'suprematist' deformations are worth can be seen in *Movement of Painterly Masses in the Fourth Dimension.*"

"Futurism—Suprematism"

B. LOPATIN

Unknown publication — Petrograd, December 1915

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When I was on my way to the office of N. E. Dobychina, I intended to write a review of the exhibition of paintings. However, after leaving it, I am sitting down to write . . . an obituary.

It is ending its earthly existence. *It* is going way to a younger, more lively movement. We are present at the funeral. Futurism says its farewell to the public, by its "last" Futurist exhibition of paintings.

But—*le roi est mort, vive le roi!*

Futurism is gone; Suprematism has arrived. Just as Pallas Athena sprang from the head of Zeus, Suprematism came out of Russian Futurism and decided that its first responsibility was to toss the latter into the dustbin of history. (The Olympic gods were more tolerant!)

I have never been too ardent an acolyte of the Futurists' quirks, but I feel sorry for the deceased.

Futurism had something daring, quest-driven, and self-assured, even if not always rational or sincere, about it. That sincerity has been ebbing with electric rapidity since its appearance, and has now been replaced by defiant insolence. But still, at least all the aforementioned qualities were present at the beginning as well as some fragments from the realm of real painting.

The defiance of Futurism has degenerated into Suprematism; sincerity—into the mocking of the public. And the realm of painting has vanished without a trace.

Only tin is left!

The Futurists still used paints and, apparently, brushes. The Suprematists paint (am I using the right word here?) . . . or rather create, with tin, nails, cardboard. Paints for them are on the sidelines. A Pity for good old Futurism! One used to walk around their exhibitions and observe how unbridled artists manifested their color instincts. Painting still sometimes transpired, like an apparition, here and there in the Futurists' canvases.

It is different with the Suprematists. Everything is dry, monotonous: no painting and no individuality. Malevich is just like Popova, Popova is just like Puni, Puni—like Udaltsova. A person cannot tell one from the other!

The exhibition "Zero–Ten" ("0.10") has one undisputed virtue: one can peruse it easily and quickly, and if one is in the company of young ladies, even rather merrily.

If I am not mistaken, the biggest success with the public is Mr. Puni's painting *A Man in a Bowler Hat*, whose highlights are a fork, stuck into the cardboard, and a pocket-size measuring tape, hung on a nail.

Mr. Puni and X. Boguslavskaya were best in expressing the ideology of this exhibition, whose manifesto is freely distributed among the lovers of art.

"A painting is a new concept of abstracted elements of reality which is devoid of meaning."

"An object (the world), freed from meaning, falls apart into elements of reality and is the foundation of art."

Having unburdened themselves thus, the Suprematists, in a disorderly and simplified way, drew anything that happened to enter their heads: old shoes, a lamp, a silhouette of an umbrella, a clock face, a number of red, green, and gray disks, half of a tailcoat, some obscure crisscrossed lines, and fragments of inscriptions. Then they stuck nails and curved sheets of painted and non-painted tin into the cardboard and attached wooden planks, ladies' buttons, sheets from newspapers, bricks, and so on, to all this.

Under these creations they wrote captions: "painterly masses in motion"; "surface and concrete"; "window washing"; "student of the College of Transportation"; "my own likeness"; "assembled gambit"; "a fleeting landscape," etc. On top of this, if one shuffled around the captions under the paintings, nothing whatsoever would change. And this is the complete description of this exhibition.

I feel sorry for the merry old Futurism. What we have to enjoy now are just the most ridiculous and absurd colors and pieces of tin and wire, "devoid of all meaning."

I am dipping my quill into the blackest of inks and writing on the catalog of "0.10": "To the eternal and loving memory of Futurism!"

"Around the Exhibitions: At the Futurists"

ANONYMOUS

Petrograd Bulletin — 22 December 1915

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At the previous Futurists' exhibitions it seemed that they had already come to the "limit," and that they, as the saying goes, had painted themselves into a corner.

It turns out that, no, that was not the limit, and that the "last" (in which sense?) Futurist exhibition, which has just opened, displays a certain retrospective quality.

It turns out that Futurism is already obsolete; Cubism arrived to replace it, and now an even more liberated and simplified movement has appeared —"Suprematism," which, as one of the participants declares in his little pamphlet, is a "triumph over utilitarian form of creative reason."

And one has to give Suprematism its due: it accomplishes its goal with flying colors.

I have always found incomprehensible the rabid animosity provoked by the Futurists, and the acrimonious attacks on them by the press. All those Futurist rantings made me experience only horrible boredom. One felt that huge confusion bordering on psychosis characterized the creators—if those who spoil and destroy materials of even the slightest value can be called the "creators" of anything.

A small pamphlet, *From Cubism to Suprematism*, by K. Malevich, is sold at the exhibition. The pamphlet is smartly written; the author is trying to clarify the essence of the theories and goals of the Futurists.

In the sections in which he speaks of the destruction of all that exists he is still somewhat logical and comprehensible.

Having banned the painting of women's flesh and faithful portraits, Futurism then abandoned perspective. A new life, machine-driven and made of iron, the roar of automobiles, the glamour of spotlights, the buzzing of propellers has awakened the soul. But the Futurists' attempt at achieving a purely painterly plasticity as such did not succeed: Futurism failed to cast away representations of objects in general; it simply "destroyed objects." This is precisely the entire essence of Futurism—destruction, never creation, while claiming that they also create!

In Cubo-Futurism, declare its acolytes, the destruction of the wholeness of objects is evident; the fragmentation and reduction of objects leads to the destruction of the representational in art. Again "destruction," always and everywhere! Cubo-Futurists have brought all things out to a town square and broken them, but failed to burn them.

And now the next thing arrives "Suprematism" —whose practitioners decide they will go even further to "triumph over utilitarian forms of creative reason." And they have finally achieved their goal! For all the works of the Suprematist variety are one-color squares or rectangles—red, green, lilac. Some fill the entire canvas, encased in a crooked (necessarily crooked!) frame; others appear scattered in all directions on the canvas. There is literally nothing but these forms and colors.

The captions under these works are very daring and varied, for example: *Self-Portrait in Two Dimensions* (squares and stripes of different colors); *Movement of Painterly Masses in the Fourth Dimension*; *Painterly Realism of Color Masses in Two Dimensions* (a plain red square); *Painterly Masses in Two Dimensions in a State of Rest*, and so on. There are more than thirty such oeuvres there . . . On the other hand, this is but a few, because one can pump out two hundred such works in one day.

There is also sculpture of the same sort: spheres, cubes, tiles, etc., for according to the same Suprematist theories, one has to draw the same forms from marble that would come from the marble's own "body," and a cube or some other form carved from it has more value than Michelangelo's *David*.

But no one can beat the record set by Maria Vasilyeva. She exhibited a small white wooden plank, seven inches long and about five inches wide. From one side the plank is cut in a semicircle. It is placed on the sill of the window looking out onto the lovely sights of the Field of Mars, the Summer Garden, and the Mikhalovskii castle—sights that fortunately have nothing in common with Suprematism. And this plank is called *A Spanish Landscape*.

There is also—it is hard to tell whether it is a caricature or made in all seriousness—*A Cubist Woman at Her Toilette*, which is something like a figure made of wooden planks, with a real sliver of a mirror in her hand and seated on a real chair. There is also *A Man in a Bowler Hat*—a set of different fragments of a human body and objects, with a real fork stuck into the painting (?!) There is *A Civil Servant*, constructed according to the same principle but with a small doll's leg attached perpendicularly to the painting, etc., etc.

The public rolled in laughter, while I felt boredom . . . boredom. I felt sorry for the energy and time wasted by people who, talented as they might be, are not builders of life but are instead life's anarchists. One had the sense of reaching a dead end.

So what next? Shall we start again from the very beginning: drawings of cavemen, geometrical and floral patterns, etc.?

Fortunately, the masses do not experience anarchism in art as infectious, and even for the participants in such movements, as a rule, the experience proves temporary.

"The Futurists' Exhibition"

ALEKSANDR ROSTISLAVOV

Discourse — Petrograd, January 1916

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One of the main laws of art is its eternal dynamism, the eternal strife for new forms, oftentimes understood not in the sense of progress and development. This is why no matter how absurd or false these new forms seem to be, it is important to pay close attention to them. The clichéd definitions that are often used to describe them, namely those of sickliness and charlatanism, make it too easy to dismiss them. It is impossible to deny that a change of forms in art is now happening, perhaps even a serious shift, and that the so called Cubo-Futurist movement already has a well-established and even acclaimed past in French art, personified by Cézanne, Picasso, and others. In our country too, the movement started long ago, created names, famous in one way or the other, and arrived, as it turns out, at the "last" exhibition at the Field of Mars, in which a certain boundary separates Futurism from the newer movement of "Suprematism" (a new painterly realism). The latter's representatives in the exhibition are K. Malevich, Puni, Boguslavskaya, I. Kliun. In terms of inventiveness, the dynamism of the newest movement is a true vortex: yesterday's innovators are today's "old men" and are not accepted at exhibitions. It is significant that the main principle professed in brochures and manifestos, of which several are available at the exhibition, is that striving for the liberation of painting from the power of nature, for the clarity of painterly tasks and means of expression, is in accordance with the lineage of progress. Undoubtedly, all painting, starting with Impressionism, has been following this path of transcending if not nature itself, then its slavish imitation, and moving toward an original means of expression. Even the attempts at the "nonrepresentational," albeit of a different kind, had already been present in the works of Kandinsky. It is a different issue altogether whether this path inevitably leads to the "Suprematism" of Malevich, an undoubtedly talented and experienced artist in the realm of "regular" painting. It remains debatable, even if one assumes that the "non-representational" is the final ideal of painting and that only in simple geometrical forms and separate masses of color can the artist express immobility and dynamism (manifested in the inclined plane) and achieve the extreme saturation and intensity of masses of color, all of which is exemplified in what is arguably the most beautiful and complex painting of the exhibition's compositions, no. 46. Are not this geometry and this premeditated coloring of such mysterious and attractive complexity telling us something, while actually, notwithstanding the "non-representational," preserving at least the simplest forms of objects? It is debatable whether the re-creation of the dynamism of life, which the artists consider among the most important tasks, is possible or even necessary in painting. This task accounts for the idealization of the machine, as it were. It is hard to dispute that such idealization is expressed in a very interesting way in the work by Tatlin, who also is an extremely talented artist in "regular" painting. His work resembles a flying airplane—a streamlined combination of planks, curved sheets of iron, and ropes strung through them. Even though the painted iron of the airplane looks like cardboard, and the mechanics of the work itself might seem easy, only a real artist could combine different materials and harmonize the crisscrossing surfaces and curves in such a way as to subsume them in a concept of unity. Much rougher and inartistic is an attempt at new sculpture—the work no. 24 by Kliun, perceived by many as sensational. Its interest perhaps lies only in the specific processing of the material. Alas, what is really good in this exhibition, from the good old painterly-decorative point of view, is not at all new. It is the many paintings that achieve, by means of the fragmentation of objects and the recombination of their parts, much more complete realistic representations than mere imitations of nature. Of course, only such skilled and talented artists as Rozanova, Udaltsova, Vasilyeva, and Popova could combine the pieces and harmonize the colors in such a way. One feels that they clearly express the very essence of their method in such works, for example, as Rozanova's *Cupboard with Dishes*, Udaltsova's *Kitchen*, Boguslavskaya's *Interior*, and even Puni's *Student of the College of Transportation*.

The transition from the fragmentation of objects, which indeed destroys the wholeness of nature, to the non-representational is logical. However, the disappearance of the Futurists, those masters of fragmentation who, in all truth, have already reached a dead-end, leads to the disappearance of the bridge in painterly-decorative perception that used to link Futurism with "regular" painting. One does not dispute the inventiveness and rapidity of the newest artists. However, the question remains open whether this is merely about form, or rather about the very notions of the nature of art that are now in the process of chaotic fermentation.

"The Last Futurist Exhibition"

ALEXANDRE BENOIS

Discourse — Petrograd, 9 January 1916

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My friends insist that I should express my opinion on the "last futurist exhibition," but, in all truth, I lack any ability to pass judgment on this kind of artistic creation. On the other hand, it seems to me unprofessional simply to dismiss it in terms such as "charlatanism, sham, insanity," and so on, because these people invested so much work and wasted so much time on it. On top of it all, the thing is not profitable. Without conviction, one simply would not engage in such nonsense for years on end—nonsense, from our standpoint. But what this conviction is, I do not know. Or I am impervious to the "infection" of this conviction; it is absolutely alien to me.

I do not admit, however, that I ended up as a "retrograde," unable to appreciate new art. In general, I have never believed in such notions, be they "backwardness" or "ultra-progressiveness." In the realm of art, it is natural for me to think, perceive, and feel outside of the confines of place and the specific moment in history, or even a specific technique. Art, whether in its most primitive or most sophisticated forms, has the capacity to captivate me. I rejoice in beauty wherever its magic invalidates chaos and disorder, wherever it triumphs over chance. But what I see in the exhibitions of our "self-proclaimed ultra-modernists" simply leaves me cold and indifferent. I do not sense the "nature of art." And, quite simply, I start feeling bored. On top of that, there is a special psychological effect: it turns out that I am interested not in what I see but in why it leaves me cold, a psychological effect, confused and filled with contradictions, causing more and more fatigue and, once again, boredom.

To start with, I cannot deny that many of those who participate in these exhibitions have talent. I am aware of Tatlin's theater drawings, which possess the charm of his quite original colors and the extraordinary balancing act of his lines. Perhaps it is just tricks, but tricks are art too, and require talent. Other Futurists, almost all of that group, also use bright and powerful colors. Besides, the intentional primitiveness of their devices notwithstanding, they can paint. From the purely technical standpoint, their paintings are not only curious but even edifying for an expert. Finally, what their teachers are saying is occasionally witty and, in essence, deserves discussing. It is not just nonsense, but something thought through and more or less "constructed." Still, they lack the most important characteristic of art: they do not "tempt," "infect," or captivate. Hence, the result is boring, oppressively boring.

Boredom begins at the very entrance to an exhibition of the "Futurists"—not just this one, but all others as well—as soon as one sees the inevitable table by the cashier, piled with silly brochures, books, and posters. They are puny, gray, and shoddy while at the same time, noisy and aggressive, or rather aspiring to be noisy and aggressive. Immediately one has an impression of a pathetic fairground booth, in front of which hoarse hustlers yell their heads off to draw one's attention. This is where a very special variety of misery sets in. One cannot help feeling sorry for these buffoons and, despite all that is unworthy in their yelling, one still sees their talent. One sees that they are artists and that they have the right to be appreciated. On the other hand, everything they say and everything they do resonates with such "strains of poverty" that all the pity and respect are immediately replaced with internal panic, and one wants to run for one's life, run anywhere—even to the flashy Petrograd painters!—so as not to see this buffoonery in rags in the cold and these countenances, painted in all colors of the rainbow, not to hear this awful, strained, already completely hoarse voice!

Obviously, I am speaking of poverty metaphorically, not literally. I am unaware of the financial situation of my colleagues on the extreme left and it is very possible that it is quite solid. At least, I wish them well from the bottom of my heart and find that in our expansive motherland there should be enough for them too. No, by poverty I mean something completely spiritual, something that is quite impossible to compensate for with gold, something that could not be healed with the help of any patrons. Perhaps much of their "hoarseness" derives from annoyance that they are not taken seriously, that crowds keep filing past their "the-ay-ter," and that only seldom does somebody come in, either out of mischief or empathy. However, it is not by accident that these crowds file past; there are profound reasons for that. For one, it is because it is so spooky and cold, so empty and dreary inside. The performance lasts only five minutes but it feels like an eternity—empty, dark, tedious eternity. It is so cold in the fairground booth and it smells of the decay of the grave.

I know that in general the entire fairground of the arts is now cold. Bitter frost has descended, and the most energetic, the most fanatical artists have started losing their spirit, and the most popular "theaters" have started fearing for their future. Some, out of despair, have resorted to displaying wax figures of illustrious people, including outdated idols. Others are beating the heroic drums of war, going back in time to the patriotic "Battle of the Cossacks and the Kabardinians." Still others, themselves already old and frail, have revived the age-old "pastorals," which they are acting out with the innocent smiles of youth. And the activity of some is simply an exercise in circus spectacle, which ensures that they will still attract some audience. Everywhere it is cold, everywhere it is somewhat spooky and scary. Everywhere one feels that things cannot continue as they are. And, most horrible of all, the situation with the youngest of these little "theaters" of the fairground is not better than with all the others. On the contrary, the frost is devilishly bitter here, and their own little booth looks, among the other structures, like a shoddily built coffin.

So what is this warmth that is so lacking in the "fairground of the arts"? With what kind of catastrophe does it threaten everybody and, above all, those who are the least protected from bad weather, those who were the last to arrive, who have hastily built their hut and have accumulated the least warmth in it? Fortunately, I have found some answers to these questions, both in the worthless pamphlet that the organizers of the Last Show append to their catalog—that is, in one of the hoarse screams of hustlers in front of the "booth"—and at the exhibition itself, among the motley colored exhibits, combining the products of Picasso's template proudly displayed next to some fruits of Froebelian "studies" and all kinds of rubbish, transformed by these grown-up children into what they call "painterly plastic art." As a matter of fact, how shall one understand the word "last," as in the "last Futurists' exhibition"? Can it be that the organizers themselves are admitting that it is time to close up shop and that they themselves are fleeing from the cold? Or are they predicting that the "last times" have come and that the "general finale" is at hand, even before the beginning of the next season? Here is what the aforementioned pamphlet says:

"When the habit of mind to see in paintings depictions of little corners of nature, virgins (sic! with a small "v"), and shameless *venuses* (just like that, with a lowercase letter and in italics) disappears, only then we will see a purely painterly work. I (it is Malevich speaking) have transformed myself in a zero of form and have fished myself out of the rubbish-filled pool of Academic art. Things disappeared like smoke to be replaced by a new culture of art, and art is moving toward being an end in itself—toward creativity and supremacy over the forms of nature." And several lines below, Mr. Ivan Kliun pontificates that "Michelangelo sculpted a beautiful David out of marble, but, purely from the point of view of sculpture, this work is negligible."

The reader would tell me that it is not worthwhile paying attention to such mischief and provocations, and that this is like the small dog, Moska, barking at an elephant in Krylov's well-known fable. It seems to me, however, that in our time this barking is no longer mere taunting, but something much more significant. And the elephant itself has become so very old, so very frail, that it looks as if it were about to topple over and never rise again. In these minutes of agony, the barking of a small dog becomes something fearful and terrifying; it is no longer a Moska but some horrifying, petty demon that is about to jump up on the elephant's head and sink its teeth deep into the elephant's brain.

No, all this is not barking or nonsense at all. Rather, it is something very serious, and it is a sign of the times. And what is most serious of all is that we consider it not serious. Indeed, all of us, all residents of the planet Earth right now, are truly decadent just like the Romans who, placing their hopes in the traditions of life created by their ancestors, were taken by surprise by both the Barbarians' invasion and their own corruption, as well as by the appearance of a new life force, Christianity.

We went even further than the Romans. We endure the worst sacrilege and the most disgusting mocking of things sacred. Out of habit, we believe we are full of strength, health, and life force, while in reality, we are already weakened, sick to our core and devoid precisely of that basic force of life. Owing to the absence of this very basic life force, it is so cold out there; good, intelligent, and educated people attack each other with cannons and poisonous gases, while at the "fairground of the arts" other people talk of virgins and Venuses, little corners of nature, and Michelangelo's "David" as if they were boots or cabbage pies.

No, all this is not barking. It is a complete and very powerful "philosophy" that tears sons away from their mothers and transforms them into "cannon fodder," that very philosophy that drives and blows away millions of living, thinking, and feeling human beings from their comfortable perches and scatters them like specks of dust around the world. It is the same philosophy that threatens complete degeneration and brutalization to all without exception.

It is boring in the "fairground booth" of Futurism not because of the platitudes and silly nonsense they say there but because they commit sacrilege there, and one knows in advance that there is no way to protest, that one is frozen stiff from the general cold and has become insensitive to everything.

Mr. Malevich speaks very plainly about the disappearance of the habit of mind to see representational objects in paintings. But do you know what this means? This means nothing less than an appeal for the disappearance of love or, in other words, of that very principle of warmth without which we are all fated to freeze and die. "The habit of mind to see depictions of little corners of nature"—but this is exactly about landscape as such; it is about Dürer and Dante, Rembrandt and Impressionism, Cézanne and Turgenev, Wagner and Phidias. And, most importantly, it is about all they loved; it is about how they loved, how they expressed their cult of life, their attitude toward the universe. "The habit to see virgins and shameless Venuses" (where does this unexpected Puritanism stem from?)—this, once again, is about all icons, about prayers—to the ancient Astarte and the Sistine Madonna in equal measure; it is about all of the most ardent and sublime, most mysterious and joyous things that exist in this world. It is about the cult of earthly and heavenly love and about the struggle over reconciling those two equally strong principles of life; it is about life itself. And instead of all this, Mr. Malevich—and not just he personally, but he as a representative of his time and his "legion"—rejoices in the fact that he has transformed himself into the zero of form, that he has destroyed the ring of the horizon that "leads the artist away from the end in itself and destruction." Mr. Malevich promises to take us both to the end and to destruction, and for this reason he, seized with pride, claims the right to be worshiped like some kind of god.

All this I have read in that worthless pamphlet, while at the exhibition we also find illustrations of this "sermon of the zero and destruction": without a catalog number but high up, right under the ceiling, in the red corner hangs a "work," undoubtedly by the same Mr. Malevich, depicting a black square set against a white field. Undoubtedly, this is precisely the "icon" that Messrs. Futurists offer instead of virgins and shameless Venuses. This exemplifies the "supremacy over the forms of nature," to which the Futurists' creativity logically leads—with its medley and destruction of "things" and with its sly, unemotional, and rationalistic experiments. This also exemplifies our entire "new culture," with its means of destruction and its even more terrifying means of mechanical "reconstruction," with all its machine-ness, with its "Americanism," with its kingdom not of the "coming Ham" but of the Ham who has already arrived. The black square in the white frame is not a simple thing, not a simple challenge, not an accidental, insignificant episode that happened in a building on the Field of Mars. It is one of the acts of self-affirmation by the principle whose name is the abomination of desolation and which boasts of leading everyone to destruction through pride and the flouting of love and tenderness. It is no longer the hoarse yelling of a hustler but the most important "trick" at the "fairground booth" of the newest culture; this is what you were promised to be shown inside and that you went to see out of a herd instinct and against your own will. Did you perhaps go to see it because you yourselves are corrupted to the

core, and you no longer know what you love and what you worship? Because all of us, living on planet Earth now, are failing the test that offers us questions about love—love for God, for one's neighbor, or at least for things!

And the Futurists' exhibition is certainly boring because all their creativity, all their activity add up to one big negation of love, one big affirmation of the cult of emptiness, darkness, and the "nothingness" of the black square in a white frame. The only difference is that some are still busy with the fragmentation and destruction of things, while others are already finished with that (the "last exhibition"!). In fact, they are finished with the world in general and have arrived at some "end in itself," or in other words, at sheer nirvana, at the final freezing point, at complete zero. How can one fail to feel bored, especially if the secret has been lost for the invocations that could dispel the madness and the raging and send them into a herd of pigs, rush them over the edge, and make them drown in the water?

Where, oh where, shall these invocations be found? How to cast a spell that can cause the lovely images of love and life to appear again against the background of the black square?

"At the Suprematists"

ANONYMOUS

News of the Stock Exchange—Petrograd, 13 January 1915

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And who are these Suprematists? This is perhaps the question that many would ask.

Alas, even the Suprematists themselves would not be able to answer this question clearly.

Yesterday, at a conference organized precisely for that purpose, their chieftains, Puni, Malevich, and Ms. Boguslawskaya displayed paintings, delivered lectures, gave explanations, drew pictures, spoke much and at length, but still, unfortunately, didn't make things any more clear.

Listening to the preachers of these new theories, one might think that they are young people, marching forward to some new horizons and that they represent some new force . . .

"You," they said to the audience, "are blind people. You are swaddled in old clothes, restricted by all those Titians and Rubenses, and you fail to see that a new life is appearing by your side, that new souls are around you. You still travel in horse-drawn carriages while the bravest are already flying airplanes . . ."

All this resonates with some sort of pride.

"We spit at the old altars," proudly declared the Suprematists. "We are building the new ones."

And herein lies their tragedy. Where lies this newness that they consider to be *Suprema Lex*?

"The artist," they claim, "must be a free creator and not a free buccaneer."

Until now, artists only plundered and raped nature. The highest degree of art was when an artist recreated nature so that it gave the impression of an actual living thing. The Suprematists would create such art objects that are not imitations of nature but rather its individual elements. Such objects, for example, are a square (a "royal baby" of art) or a painted plane.

Reproaching contemporary artists for their nostalgia for the past, for manufacturing imitations of antiquity, the Suprematists themselves do not recognize that they have posited the most antiquated and remote primitivism as their ideal.

Puni attacked the critics, especially A. Benois, with much ardor and agitation for failing to understand their art! Malevich spoke with much power, defiance, and striking images . . . But alas, these speeches and paintings by the Suprematists failed to inflame anybody. The public just kept laughing merrily.

"Exhibition '0.10'"

V.G.

Evening—Petrograd, 20 January 1916

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Entering the premises of this exhibition one has an awkward feeling . . . It is as if one found oneself in a very nasty place. Perhaps this is the reason that all people who come in cast their eyes down and try not to look at one another.

In exaggeratedly loud voices or, alternatively, softly and shyly, they ask the doorman: "And where is this exhibition?" The doorman smiles ironically and points up to the second floor.

With the same awkward feeling, one buys a ticket and a catalog and sets out to look at the "paintings."

It makes no sense to describe this drivel. Suffice it to say that the insolence of the artists knows no boundaries. Thus, for example, under no. 107, and with no commentary, a plain wooden board is exhibited—about three and a half inches wide and half a foot long—and painted green.

The public is confused . . . What in the world is this? Some touch it, others even smell it furtively . . . To no avail! For it is not possible to penetrate this "mystery." A natural merry laughter resonates in the first room of the exhibition: the public peruses the paintings of Ms. Vasilyeva. A group of young people stands there playing guessing games:

"Gentlemen! What do you think no. 95 is?"

"I think it is what one sees through a broken binocular!"

"No, no!" the other cries out. "It is like, you know, when you look through a faceted glass stopper of a carafe, it's just this kind of landscape that you see!"

"And this actually is . . . 'Portrait of a Lady'?!" A second of silence is followed by an explosion of merry laughter. The group moves on and keeps laughing.

Two women stand on the side. The young one is rapturously listening to what the older one, apparently an old acolyte of Futurism, is telling her. "And why is this exhibition the last one?" the young one asks. "You see, the word 'last' should be understood as . . . well, as in 'the latest fashion' or 'the last word in technology,' and so on." "And what is this?" asks again the young one, pointing at a white square inside which another, slightly smaller, red square is painted. "It is a portrait of a peasant woman," says the older one, smiling condescendingly, "but it is two-dimensional, so it cannot be understood literally . . ."

"I am beginning to understand these paintings!" says a young lady in the other corner of the room after stealing a sly glance into a catalog. "See, here, scissors, needles, spools . . . I think it is a sewing box!" "Check what the catalog says," says her girlfriend. "Look, you are right!"

Descending the staircase, I absentmindedly took out the ticket and looked at its number. "Idiot no. 2215" came to mind—a line from an old joke. And suddenly I felt an awful desire to stop two civil servants coming my way and to say to them: "Gentlemen! Don't go, or you will be idiots nos. 2216 and 2217! Better to donate your fifty cents to benefit a hospital for the artists!"

13

Erste Internationale Dada-Messe *The First International Dada Fair*

Berlin, 1920

LOCATION AND DATES
Otto Burchard Gallery, Lützow-Ufer 13, Berlin,
c. 25 June–25 August 1920

CURATORS
George Grosz, Raoul Hausmann, John Heartfield

ITINERARY
None

ARTISTS
Anonymous, Johannes Alberts, Johannes Sokrates Albrecht, Hans Arp, Johannes Baader, Johannes Theodor Baargeld, Carl Boesner, Otto Burchard, Hans Citroën, Otto Dix, Alois Erbach, Max Ernst, George Grosz, Maud E. Grosz, Raoul Hausmann, John Heartfield, Ben Hecht, Wieland Herzfelde, Hannah Höch, Georg Kobbe, Georg Koch, Sigmar Mehring, Francis Picabia, Max Schlichter, Rudolf Schlichter, Otto Schmalhausen, Georg Scholz, Walter Serner, Hans Heinz Stuckenschmidt

EXHIBITION CATALOG
Erste Internationale Dada-Messe. Essay by Raoul Hausmann, introduction by Wieland Herzfelde. Berlin: Malik Verlag, 1920.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
Number of artists: c. 29
Number of works: c. 174
Total attendance: unknown (310 by 16 July)

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The activity of the Berlin Dada group culminated in this contentious exhibition. Whereas European Dada had begun as avant-garde performance, in Zurich in 1916, far from the killing fields of World War I, in Berlin the movement developed amid wartime deprivation and postwar political insurrection. Signs in "The First International Dada Fair" proclaimed "Dada is political" and "Dadaist man is the radical opponent of exploitation." Newspapers and fliers were scattered around the gallery, recounting the participants' political agitation in a country fraught with assassinations of leftist leaders and fighting between workers and troops. Suspended over the intentionally chaotic display was John Heartfield and Rudolf Schlichter's *Prussian Archangel*, an effigy of a military officer with the head of a pig and marked "Hanged by the Revolution."

This being a Dada exhibition, the artists' political vituperation mixed with humor, which they often directed at art that aspired to the beautiful and the sublime. The Berlin Dadaists saw high art as a means of ignoring the political realities around them, and they assertively chose another path. In the catalog, the artist and publisher Wieland Herzfelde refers to the pieces in the show as "products" rather than artworks. This anti-aesthetic stance could be seen in everything from Otto Schmalhausen's altered death mask of Beethoven to Heartfield's and George Grosz's "corrected masterpieces." Both the aggressive installation and much of the work in the exhibition—including examples of the group's signature innovation of photomontage—attacked the traditional notion of art as unique beauty created by inspired genius.

Although there were many offensive works in the show, it was Grosz's portfolio of lithographs disparaging the military that got the artists into legal trouble. Accused of insulting the German army, five members of the Dada group were brought to trial in April 1921, but in the end charges were dropped for some and light fines levied on others. On this dispiriting note, the last group manifestation of Berlin Dada came to a close. The exhibition, however, looked forward to future developments; it contained the printed program from the previous month's Festival Dada at the Salle Gaveau in Paris, the city where Dada would soon take a more aesthetic turn.

↗ Sticker for "The First International Dada Fair." The exhibition was held at an art gallery located on the ground floor of an apartment building owned by Dr. Otto Burchard, a dealer in East Asian art, antiquities, and French decorative arts. The show was well publicized and attracted considerable attention; announcements appeared in at least three Berlin newspapers, including *Berliner Lokal-Anzeiger*, *Berliner Börsencourier*, *Vorwärts*, as well as the *Frankfurter Oderzeitung*. On 27 July, the show's self-proclaimed *Oberdada* (Chief Dada), Johannes Baader, placed a second announcement in *Vorwärts* for events and lectures taking place on 29 July.

→ One of two posters for "The First International Dada Fair" ostensibly advertised for a security guard for the show. The text reads, "Athlete with professional attire wanted for one month to guard the Dada Exhibition. Applicants please register with [Dr. Otto Burchard Gallery] Berlin W. 10, Lützow Ufer 13."

← Artists and organizers in the main room of the exhibition, which took place in two rooms of Dr. Burchard's gallery. The dense installation consisted of posters, photomontages, paintings, reliefs, drawings, book covers, and other printed matter. Left to right: Hannah Höch, Otto Schmalhausen, Raoul Hausmann, John Heartfield (completely obscured, holding child), Dr. Otto Burchard, Margarete and Wieland Herzfelde, Rudolf Schlichter, unknown (possibly Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, according to annotations by Höch), unknown, Johannes Baader.

Among other works visible are Otto Dix's painting *45% Ablebodied* (partial view, far left), a relief by Max Ernst, *Control Panel for Rubber Fruit* (above Dix's painting), Grosz's montage *Germany, a Winter's Tale* (on wall at far right), and posters screaming slogans such as "Dada is political" (bottom right), "Dilettantes revolt against art!" (center right, top), and "Take Dada seriously, it's worth it" (top left). Left to right: Hausmann, Burchard, Höch (seated), Baader, Wieland and Margarete Herzfelde, Schmalhausen (seated), George Grosz, Heartfield.

↗ Works displayed proclaimed the political preoccupations and anti-aesthetic approach of the Berlin Dadaists. Hanging from the ceiling was Heartfield and Schlichter's *Prussian Archangel*, an effigy of a military officer; the waistband reads, "Martin Luther, Protestant Church Song: From Heaven High I Come to You."

→ Cover of *La Domenica Illustrata* (Milan), 25 July 1920. The caption reads, "VERGING ON MADNESS — In Berlin the 'Dadaists' have opened an exhibition where they admire mannequins, statues, paintings, and dummies, whose dismal significance is stifled by the grotesque."

→ Works in the main room of "The First International Dada Fair" included three posters with portraits of the organizers: *Portrait of the Dadasopht Raoul Hausmann* (far left), *Portrait of the Dadamechanic John Heartfield* (center left), and *Portrait of the Propaganda Marshal George Grosz* (far right). The posters include a variety of Dada declarations, including "Down with art," "Dada is great and John Heartfield is its prophet!" and "Dada is on the side of the revolutionary proletariat!" Hannah Höch displayed two Dada puppets on a pedestal (center), directly above Höch's puppets is a collage by Max Ernst; above the door is the title page of *Neue Jugend*, a small Expressionist periodical that published the first Dadaist illustrated review in 1917. For sale on the table (right) was a set of ten lithographs by Grosz, titled *Gott mit Uns* and published by Malik-Verlag, the publishing house owned by Wieland Herzfelde, the poet and brother of Heartfield.

←← In the main room, George Grosz and John Heartfield held a poster declaring "Art is dead: Long live the new machine art of Tatlin." Between the two men was their collaborative work *The Philistine Heartfield Gone Wild (ElectroMechanical Tatlin Plastic)*, consisting of a tailor's mannequin with a lightbulb in place of the head, a revolver on the right shoulder, a bell on the left shoulder, kitchen utensils, and a set of dentures between its legs.

← Raoul Hausmann and Hannah Höch posed in front of a display of their works. On the right-hand wall were pieces by Hausmann, including a large Dada poster (top) and two montages: *Tatlin Lives at Home* (center left, directly behind Höch) and *A Bourgeois Parisian Brain Causes a World Movement* (center right). On the left-hand wall were pieces by Höch: a Dada poster titled *Ali Baba-Diele* (top), a relief montage titled *Dictatorship of the Dadaists*, (right, directly above Hausmann), and Höch's monumental photomontage *Cut with the Kitchen Knife Dada Through the Last Epoch of Weimar Beer-Belly Culture in Germany* (bottom).

→ The smaller, second room was dominated by Johannes Baader's assemblage *The Great Plasto-Dio-Dada-Drama: Germany's Greatness and Demise Through Teacher Hagendorf*. The work was constructed out of found material—mousetraps, a powder keg, an advertising dummy, miners' lamps, illustrated newspapers, and other ephemera. The room also contained covers of Dada publications (including *391*), the program by Francis Picabia for the Dada event of May 1920 at the Salle Gaveau, Paris, and works by younger artists such as Hans Citroën and Hans Heinz Stuckenschmidt.

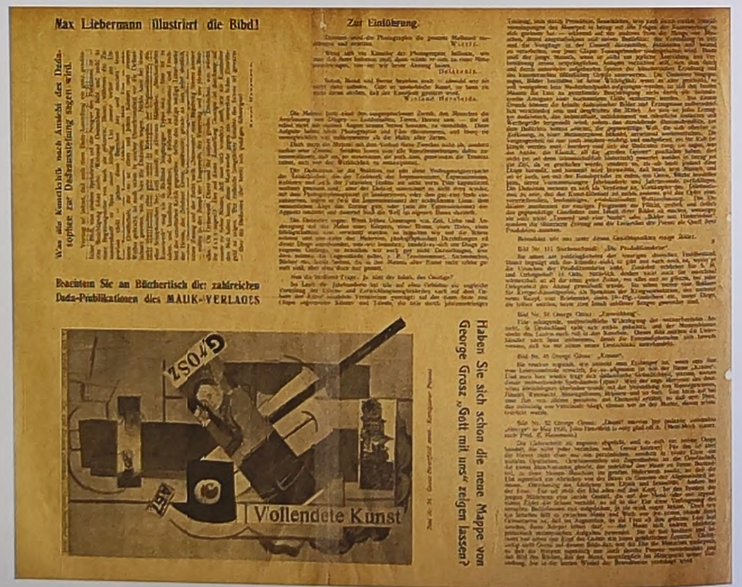
→ Cover of the catalog for "The First International Dada Fair," 1920. The four-page catalog was published by Malik Verlag and includes a checklist of 174 numbered works. The cover was designed by John Heartfield, with text surprinted over Heartfield's montage *Life and Times in the Universal City, 12:05 noon.* A short statement by Raoul Hausmann is printed upside-down at the bottom: "The Dadaist person is the radical opponent of exploitation, the meaning of exploitation creates nothing but stupid people, and Dadaist man hates stupidity and loves nonsense! Therefore, the Dadaist person proves himself to be truly real as opposed to the stinking mendacity of the patriarch and capitalist rotting away in his easy chair."

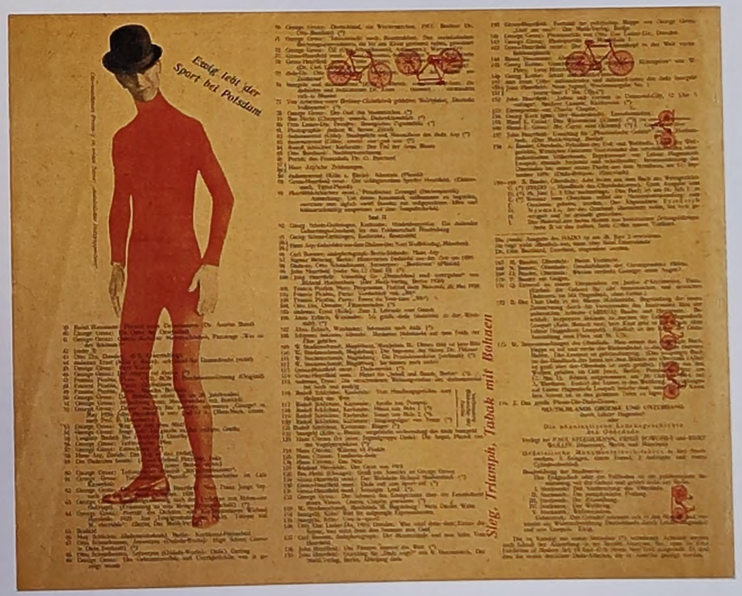
↘ Page two contains an essay by Hausmann, printed sideways at left, and an introduction by Wieland Herzfelde that continues on page three (translation, p. 198). Reproduced on this page is George Grosz and Heartfield's *Corrected Masterwork: Pablo Picasso, the Happy Life—Dedicated to Dr. Carl Einstein.*

↘↘ Page three includes the beginning of the checklist of works, the order of which corresponds to the arrangement of the installation, and another photomontage by Grosz and Heartfield, *Corrected Masterwork: Henri Rousseau, Self-Portrait.*

→→ The checklist of works continues on page four, surprinted on Johannes Sokrates Alberts's photolithographic illustration of the "Super Music Dada, A. Press," performing a "Dadaist Wood-Puppet Dance." Alberts's illustration was included in the first room of the exhibition (see photograph of Raoul Hausmann and Hannah Höch, p. 194, center top).

KUNSTHANDLUNG DR. OTTO BURCHARD
BERLIN, LÜTZOW-UFER 13
Geöffnet täglich von 10—1 Uhr vormittags und 3—6½ Uhr nachmittags
Eintritt 3 Mk.
Die Bewegung Dada fährt zur Aufhebung des Kunsthandels
ERSTE INTERNATIONALE
DADA-MESSE
Veranstaltet von
Marschall G. Grosz,
Dadasoph Raoul Hausmann,
Monteurdada John Heartfield
Katalog / Preis 1,70 Mk.
Ausstellung und Verkauf dadaistischer Erzeugnisse


Max Liebermann illustriert die Bibel!
Zur Einführung.
Beachten Sie an Büchertisch die zahlreichen Dada-Publikationen des MALIK-VERLAGES
Haben Sie sich schon die neue Mappe von George Grosz „Gott mit uns" zeigen lassen?
GROSZ
Vollendete Kunst



Erste Internationale Dada-Messe [exh. cat.]

Introduction [excerpt]

WIELAND HERZFELDE

Berlin, 1920

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Painting once had the distinct goal of making it possible for people to see things, landscapes, animals, buildings, etc., which they could not see with their own eyes. Today these tasks have been taken over by photography and film, which perform them incomparably more perfectly than the painters of all times.

But painting did not die off with the loss of this goal; it searched for new ones. Since then all efforts in art can be summarized as follows: they share a tendency to emancipate themselves from reality no matter how different they are.

Dadaism is the reaction to all those attempts to deny the factual, attempts which were the driving force of the Impressionists, Expressionists, Cubists, and also the Futurists (in that they did not want to capitulate to film); but the Dadaist does not try to compete again with the photographer's apparatus, or even to imbue it with soul by preferring (like the Impressionists) the worse lens: the human eye—or (like the Expressionists) by turning the apparatus around and constantly portraying only the world within their own breast.

The Dadaists say: if at an earlier time, love and effort were expended on the painting of a body, a flower, a hat, a shadow, etc, we only have to take the scissors and cut out all these things we need from among the paintings photographic reproductions; if it concerns something smaller we don't even need a depiction at all, but can take the objects themselves, for example: pocket-knives, ashtrays, books, etc., all things which have been quite beautifully painted in the museums of old art, but painted just the same.

Now the famous question: Yes, but the content, the spiritual?

Over the centuries, the uneven distribution of life—and developmental possibilities has produced outrageous conditions in the field of art just as in all other fields. On the one side are a clique of so-called able and talented people who, partly through decades of training, partly by protection, tenacity, in part too through inherited gifts, have monopolized all judgments about art. On the other side are the mass of people whose modest and naïve desires to portray, communicate, and come to terms with themselves and their surroundings have been suppressed by that clique of trendsetters. Today the young person who does not want to give up all claim to education and to the broadening of his native talents has to submit to the thoroughly authoritarian system of artistic education and the artistic public judgment.

In contrast, Dadaists are saying that production of pictures is not important, and that at least one should not assume a position of authority when one does make pictures. In this way, the pleasure the masses may take in the creative activity would not be ruined by the professional arrogance of a haughty guild. For this reason the contents and also the media of Dadaistic pictures and products can be extraordinarily varied. By itself any product is Dadaistic which is created without influence from and regard for public authority and criteria of judgment. And it remains Dadaistic as long as the image works against illusion, out of the need to subversively assist the contemporary world, which obviously is in a state of disintegration and metamorphosis. The past is important and relevant only insofar as its cult must be opposed. . . . Today no man, even one who speaks with the language of art—a genius—could create works whose conditions belong to past centuries and millennia.

The Dadaists consider it an accomplishment to be vanguard opponents of dilettantism, because an artistic dilettante is nothing other than the victim of a prejudiced, arrogant, aristocratic point of view. The only programme the Dadaists recognize is: the duty to make current events, current in both time and place, the contents of their pictures. This is the reason they do not consider the "Thousand-and-one-nights" or "Pictures from Indochina" as sources for their work, but rather the illustrated magazine and the lead stories in the press.

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Originally published as "Zur Einführung." From Rose-Carol Washton Long, ed., German Expressionism: Documents from the End of the Wilhelmine Empire to the Rise of National Socialism (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 273–74. Translations edited by Nancy Roth.

"Kunst-Bolschewismus"

P.F.

Neue Preussische Zeitung — Berlin, 3 July 1920

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The "Monster Dada Exhibition" at the Galerie Otto Burchard is the proverbial writing on the wall, a chronometer of the incredible confusion of all moral and intellectual notions. For these brothers in Dada, under the leadership of Chief Dada Baader, there is, as far as one can see, neither logic nor principles. If one argues with them and insists that the conclusion exactly contradicts the premise, they are as delighted as savages, and say that is exactly what they intended. One must, then, simply accept, as unprovable, everything that they have glued together into a potpourri of cuttings from only the most radical publications, and regard it as the babblings of the weak-minded. Everywhere, large posters boastfully proclaim that "Dada triumphs"; but, in spite of the fact that a professional athlete in a vest is standing guard in the exhibition, a normal average European would not be able to understand anything of the "art objects" on display here. In addition, the whole thing is enormously lacking in wit, and is intellectually so impoverished that one is not even moved to smile. Great art of the past is merely negated, impudently and brazenly, with terms of abuse, or is hidden beneath inanely affixed scraps of photographs; and one of these Dada knaves has even dared to transform the death mask of Beethoven in an unutterably stupid and idiotic manner. The only thing that these trainee marksmen do bring off is a loathsome hatred for our military leaders in the World War, whom they defile in a drunken manner as cheap as it is repulsive. The most complete dissolution in the event is brought about by the idiocy of the Chief Dada, who styles himself "President of the Earth and the World, Head of the International Court, True Secret Chairman of the Inter-Telluric Supra-Dadaistic Universe of Peoples," etc., etc., even though he is qualitatively perhaps the least harmful element in so far as he is currently becoming acquainted with the madhouse. His childish, laboriously concocted *Teacher Hagendorf's Reading Desk* [Lehrer Hagendorfs Lesepult] takes up a great deal of space without making even the slightest sense except that of nonsense. But enough of this trash. In spite of all the ballyhoo from these bohemian youths, all we find here is total impotence and decrepit, victimless confidence trickery. In one especially inspired moment, one of these babbling Dada-sophists wrote his own critique of this Dada exhibition. I cannot resist citing it here, word for word, and I have to add that I fully agree with it:

"Let it be said at the outset that even this Dada event is an absolute bluff, and is not worth seeing. While Germany quakes in an unprecedented governmental crisis of unforeseeable duration, while the meeting in Spaa pushes our future fate further and further into uncertainty—these fellows make trivial fun out of rags, kitsch, and photographs. Such a decadent society, in which each and every soul is disintegrating, has rarely been represented in public so brazenly as the Dadaists have represented it here. Nothing at all of what is here can astonish us any more, everything is drowning in spasms of the lust for originality, which—given that it is lacking in any creativity—expends itself in inane antics. The 'mechanical work of art' may be feasible in Russia, but here it is untalented and artless imitation, the most extreme form of cynicism and effrontery toward earnest criticism. Even the single reasonable talent to be found in this mob, the draftsman Grosz, proves a disappointment, for it is precisely in his work that it becomes clear where weakness of character and the inability to resist the search for the 'latest thing' can lead a gifted artist—right to the heart of the swamp of boredom, error, and trite, drunken hoaxing. The work shown at this exhibition is, throughout, of such a low level that one has to marvel at an art gallery that has the nerve to charge such a high entry fee. The owner, who was perhaps misled (whom the Dada numbskulls have, in passing, named 'General Dada'), should be warned: 'On the Dadaists, silence should be maintained forever.' 'O hohojoho — domohodoho!'" (R. Hülsenbeck).

One sees what awaits us and our thousand-year-old German art if Bolshevism should penetrate here. (The danger is very great!) In any case, what has become of the art censor?

"Grosse Monstre-Dada-Schau"

ERNST COHN-WIENER

Neue Berliner Zeitung — Berlin, 6 July 1920

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If I had had to arrange this exhibition, I would have sought out, in place of the idyllically located Galerie Burchard beneath the chestnut trees on Schöneberger Ufer, a fairground that was as noisy as possible. I would have set up the most brightly colored stalls among carousels, helter-skelters, boxing rings, little bands, and hurdy-gurdy players. I would have had the Herzfelde brothers posed with kettle-drum and triangle on the right, and George Grosz with a great big trombone on the left. And I would have cried:

"Keep on coming, step right up, very little respected public, please enter! Here you will see no boxing-wrestling-racing-reviewing-brawling. Here you will see true art. A Museum of Anatomy where you can see yourselves dissected, and not only an arm or a leg, but your head and your heart. And not only your own, but that of all of you at once, without any magic, quite naturally painted.

"That was our militarism. All you can see, of course, is a stuffed uniform, but it is precisely this figure that was your superior, completely true to life down to the heels of his boots! — What is that you say? What are they for? To trample you underfoot, of course!

"Here you can see the teacher of your so-called youth, the man with the hereditary ideals. And next to him, the true, great art: the *Mona Lisa*, etc.— Yes, in the picture there are a good many vile things— but what are you shouting about?— the pictures seem real enough to you, and then what are they to you, anyway, Hecuba? And, if someone now painted a *Mona Lisa*, as bold as she was in those days, then you would—

"This here is a cross-section of yourselves, with all the sentimentalities, instances of untruthfulness, enthusiasms, and prejudices that you love, because that's what you hear and because the others do it, too. Just as you let yourselves be trampled because that's what you hear and because the others do it, too. Here you can see your passion for nature, your science, your so-called love, as it really is, without the usual masks of picture postcard sentimentality.

"Here you can see the German Republic, culture, religion, and . . .

"What's that you say?— That this is not an art exhibition? Well, we are after all at the fair, and this is a cabinet of curiosities with a distorting mirror in which you can see yourselves without the infamous pack of lies by means of which you tell yourselves in order to be able to believe that you are respectable individuals. Here you can see yourselves without the illusion of beauty, without any of your money, without your knowledge—simply naked, naked, naked!"

As I said, that is how I would have cried up the stalls if I were a Dadaist. But I'm not. Someone has to sweep out our houses, but I love the man who builds them.

"Dada"

ADOLF BEHNE

Die Freiheit — Berlin, 9 July 1920

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The Dadaists Hausmann, Dix, Albrecht, Gross, Hannah Höch, and some others have opened an exhibition at the Salon Burchard, at 13 Lützowufer, for which they charge an entry fee of three marks and 30 pfennigs, probably in the expectation that only the purse-holders of the West End will pay a visit. So, although it may well be asserted, on a poster within the exhibition, that Dada is on the side of the revolutionary proletariat, the Burchard exhibitors in fact end up enacting the intellectual dictatorship of the proletariat as a form of overture for an audience of well-to-do philistines. Very much a case of "art," then.

Dada wants to liberate us from all bourgeois lies. It wants to undermine the windy rhetoric, the conventions, and the hypocrisy of the bourgeois mentality; and it has succeeded brilliantly in some sure-footed hunting out of the bourgeois in disguise. The best of this work has been achieved in the essays of Raoul Hausmann, published in the *Einziger*, in the *Erbe*, and recently in issue no. 8 of *Dada* (Malik-Verlag, Berlin).

"Know yourself" — is the wisdom of Dadaism. Forget about the past, forget about the future; know yourself . . . today! Wrap yourself up in today, whether you are happy to do so or not. Every flight from the present is a weakness, every passing of judgment an instance of narrow-mindedness. Only he who knows himself in the present moment has the right to open his mouth. As the intellect eagerly insinuates itself between things as they are and our perceptions of them—be it in the form of a judgment, an assumption, a wish, a belief, an intellectual tradition, or an idea—the Dadaists are against intellect. They uphold the pure primitivism of unmediated experience.

It is out of this Dadaist stance, which has an ethical value, that the art of Dada arises. Making art does not, strictly speaking, form part of the Dada program. But where does it leave Dada when

↑ Cover of *En avant dada: Die Geschichte des Dadaismus*, by Richard Huelsenbeck, 1920. Although not a participant in the exhibition, Huelsenbeck was one of the founding members of the Berlin Dada group; he wrote and edited several key Dada books and texts. This book and the *Dada Almanach* (right) were published within a few months of the opening of "The First International Dada Fair."

→ Cover of *Dada Almanach*, edited by Huelsenbeck, 1920. This publication includes texts by various Dada artists, among them Francis Picabia and Tristan Tzara.

its young people barricade themselves against its command to "know yourself," taking refuge in self-assurances, in Ten Commandments advertised on posters: in short, when they make idiots of themselves instead of knowing themselves? Dada is itself mired in Expressionism. It has to recognize that—and then laugh! But such recognition, which is bitter enough, is not yet the final form of self-knowledge.

The art of the Dadaists can only be a direct expression of the age. It cannot really differ in character from the present day. Mr. Scheinrat recently penned the delightful proposition: "Art is able to transpose man into a more beautiful world." This reflects a bourgeois understanding of art. Dada shows us the world as it is in 1920. Dada would like to tell us: 1920 is not as horrible as all that. Man is a machine, culture consists of rags, education is darkness, intellect is a form of brutality, the norm is stupidity, and the military is in charge. Only a fool would nowadays paint *The Elysian Fields* [Gefilde der Seligen]. All "beautiful" colors and forms are nowadays fraudulent. The state of the intellect in 1920 is shown by the Dadaists in images that have been glued together out of advertising logos, photographs, driver's licenses, iron crosses, razor blades, scraps of braid, uniform insignia, and newspaper clippings. They swap the heads on photographs, cut them off and recombine them, and have evolved a technique that produces an uncanny tension and that undeniably enriches our conventional approach to making paintings. Here there are to be found a great many important ideas—and not least for the cinema, whose future I see as above all very Dadaistic. A number of truly marvelous pasted works by Hanna Höch, Raoul Hausmann, and George Grosz make this exhibition well worth a visit. But there is in fact far too much good work in it. With the walls hung entirely with these Dada pictures, there no longer appears to be any real difference between this movement and any other formula for art, be it Impressionist or Expressionist. Only that which is unique is truly Dada.

When the Dadaists had finished installing their exhibition, they should have thrown out half of what they had hung. Annoying the philistine bourgeois, annoying the philistine artist—that alone is rather too little for Dada. It really would have been better to show Kurt Schwitters and Golyscheff here rather than many "true" Dadaists. An outstanding abattoir picture by Otto Dix and a good picture by Paul [Johannes Sokrates] Albrecht, *Death of the Musketeer Helmbake on the Field of Honor* [Der Tod des Füseliers Helmhake auf dem Felde der Ehre], are very badly hung. But then these are not examples of orthodox Dadaism.

Dadaism is a force to be reckoned with. It sees things for what they are—and, by this means, puts an end to them. Correctly understood, it does away with every form of opposition. Dadaism, which alternately gives sermons and snaps at them, is still only in its modest beginnings. Terror is unworthy of true Dada. The German Revolution is at a stage where scolding has a counter-revolutionary effect.

This display has turned out to be something of a German Dada Exhibition. We must hope that the next one will be an International Dada Exhibition. The most promising item in the present show is a poster with the slogan: "Dada is not bluffing."

"Dada" [excerpt]

PAUL WESTHEIM

Frankfurter Zeitung — Frankfurt, 17 July 1920

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Otto Burchard has opened a new art gallery in Berlin, which boldly began its series of exhibitions with works by Rudolf Schlichter. . . . Now, however, Burchard is hosting a Dadaist show. It is probably only by accident that Dada has strayed into a commercial art gallery. We do not need to understand it fully here, but Dada is not a new direction in art, nor is it metaphysics. Dada is not even about shocking the bourgeoisie, which the whole world is already doing nowadays anyway—nor can it be described as clowning around or humbug, even though Dada's proponents do not let anyone prevent them from pulling a gag or having some fun. Dada is a . . . reaction—a reaction to the spirit of our times, which have devolved into a culture of slogans, deceit, exploitation, and suppression, a reaction to the years 1914, 1915, 1920, 1921 up until an as of yet unknown end. Those who have a craving for big words might even say that Dada is a worldview. Dada is against everything: against lying, against deceit, against slogans, against spectacle-wearing seriousness . . . innocuousness; Dada is simply against! Against God and the world (in the most real, literal sense). Dada is against the organized disorder of the world and especially against every possible type of order? Dada is against morality and against immorality, it is against politics and is eminently political, it is against capitalism and against socialism, against government and against misgovernment. Perhaps Dada is the great sentimentality of childish idealists, who are staring aghast at the shattered remains of our chaotic reality, who—as great unbelievers—live in the firm belief that salvation can only be achieved through the complete disintegration of our world, comprised as it is of slogans and deceit. Dada is (of course) also against art, but this does not preclude the presence of a great artist among the ranks of these unsolicited firemen of world conflagration—namely George Grosz, who is sometimes an astonishing painter and graphic artist, a graphic artist in the style of Daumier, but at other times, consumed by skepticism, is against himself, against art and, to put it simply, is Dada.

"Dada"

PETER PANTER [KURT TUCHOLSKY]

Berliner Tageblatt — Berlin, 20 July 1920

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At 13 Lützowufer there is now a Dada exhibition. Because we have nothing else to worry about.

If one discounts the element of bluff in this association, one is not left with terribly much. I know precisely what these people want: the world is confusing, meaningless, pretentious, and intellectually puffed up. This is what they want to deride, reveal, deny, and destroy. And on that point there is nothing to discuss. (Just like artistic Bolshevism in general, despair about the justification of the value of art is a concern that one cannot simply dismiss. Disbelief takes hold.) But I do not like their way of going about it.

Anyone who hates fervently must have once loved very deeply. Anyone who wishes to deny the world in such a fashion must have once affirmed it very strongly. Must have once embraced that which he now condemns to the flames. But what impression does this make?

Minor literary talents endeavor, in a rather spasmodic fashion, to terrify the bourgeoisie and to insult that which is sacred to other people. That is the word for it: a spasm. From nine in the morning until seven in the evening, without a break, they are corrosively humorous and disposed to satire. It is Dadaism in return for an entry fee of three marks and thirty pfennigs. "The real thing obtainable only here. Beware of imitations."

The exhibition itself resembles a very cute dime store. (Having said that, I believe that hundreds of generations of artists could have done this more wittily, more convincingly, and more daringly at their studio parties.) A fat, stuffed sailor hangs from the ceiling, looking blissfully down upon the clutter of old hatboxes, cardboard boxes, rusty nails, very unsuitably positioned sets of false teeth and paintings. It is rather quiet in there, and no one reacts as if outraged anymore. Dada—oh well . . .

But there is someone who really does stir things up, and for whom it is worth going to see the exhibition: this is George Grosz, a real man, a fellow full of sarcasm. If drawings could kill, the Prussian military would certainly be dead by now. (And, by the way, drawings can kill.) His portfolio *God with Us* [Gott mit uns] deserves a place on every good bourgeois family table—its grimacing caricatures of majors and sergeants are apparitions drawn from reality. He, alone, truly rages, kicks up a racket, scoffs and sneers, and gives us something that we rarely see: revolution.

The others merely leave scratches. He kills. The others simply make little jokes.

This man is serious. Is it really so unbelievably courageous to write, say, about some picture by Giorgione and then to reject it with the addition of two fat white brushstrokes? That is mere stage thunder.

But you absolutely must not miss the boxing match between Grosz and the century of the soldier.

"Dada-Ausstellung am Lützowufer 13, Kunstsalon Burchard"

G.G.L. [GERTRUD ALEXANDER]

Die Rote Fahne — Berlin, 25 July 1920

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"Dada is great and John Heartfield is his prophet."

"Dada is not bluffing."

"Dada triumphs."

It is on posters with slogans such as these that Dada sings its own praises.

And it certainly needs such praise so as to assure us that Dada is indeed not "bluffing."

The first impression one has of the Dada exhibition is, in fact, that of a great bluff. "Hoax," the term employed by the restrained, good-natured critic of the *Vossische Zeitung*, is putting it too mildly. For this business is too dull, too little

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suited to laughter, too serious, and too pretentious to be a mere "hoax." The bourgeoisie, it is true, can do no better than laugh at it. But the pale Dada youth who, with a patronizingly sympathetic expression, seeks to introduce Dada to lesser mortals, without of course being himself in a position to explain all the oddities that hang or stand in the exhibition, would have rejected, in disappointment, the opinion of Max Osborn, who is right to treat the whole thing as a bit of fun.

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Such "sculptures" could be justified only in an anti-military panopticon, where no one would have any complaint to raise against them. But presenting a collection of perversities as a contribution to culture, and even to art, is no longer a "hoax," but sheer effrontery.

Is it not effrontery when we find obscene words scrawled over reproductions of Leonardo's *Mona Lisa* and Botticelli's *Flora*, and when these are hung alongside reproductions of works by Dadaists, as examples of "bourgeois art that should be trampled back into the Middle Ages and beyond?"

Do these gentlemen really imagine that they can get at the bourgeoisie by this means? That they have somehow caught out the bourgeoisie? The bourgeoisie just laugh at it all. The *Vossische Zeitung* calls it a "hoax," the *Post* terms it "higher nonsense," and yet both still thereby acknowledge Dada as a force in art: for they can still smell in it the flesh of their flesh—bourgeois decadence. When one finds, as in the case of the review in the *Post*, comparisons with Rabelais, Fischart, and Morgenstern, it is clear that there has truly been a great effort to accommodate this exhibition!)

One could dismiss Dada as mere megalomania and categorize it as pathological, if these things were not so risibly small, minute, and impoverished by comparison with the proletariat's mighty struggle for liberation, the only place where there is serious commitment to the destruction of bourgeois society. And the proletariat will wage and win this battle without the assistance of a campaign against art and culture undertaken by a bourgeois literary clique. The proletariat has no patience for perversities of this sort, for which the sensation-greedy bourgeoisie of the West End are still willing to pay three marks and 30 pfennigs; and it cannot get far enough away from all this bourgeois business, where the bourgeoisie can be exposed as often as they like.

We just ask that these gentlemen, who glue their cut-out photographs on to the figures in old-fashioned drawings so as to make accomplished caricatures, do not call themselves communists.

We find it hard to comprehend how A. Behne critic of the *Freiheit*, can take a charitable view of such revolutionary nonsense, treating figures in a panopticon and the magic of the cinema as examples of art, proposing the "enlightenment" of the workers, and speaking of "values." "All 'beautiful' colors and forms are nowadays fraudulent." "Only a fool would nowadays paint *The Elysian Fields* [Gefilde der Seligen]." Yes, indeed! For the bankrupt bourgeoisie there are only lies and chaos, just as modern bourgeois art is itself largely kitsch. (One need only look at the big Berlin art exhibitions.)

But what does the proletariat care about all this? Does it perhaps not have the right and the hope to improve its own situation—and perhaps even in the foreseeable future? It does not need to trouble the bankrupt bourgeois. And, without suffering any damage to its proletarian soul, its class-consciousness, and its readiness for battle, it can just as well seek beauty in the old, better days of the bourgeoisie, which brought forth individuals no less revolutionary than the worker revolutionary of today.

This self-aware fighter does not need to destroy works of art, as Dada does, in order to free himself from being "bourgeois." For "bourgeois" is precisely what he is not.

But a person who can do nothing but glue stupid pieces of kitsch together, as practitioners of Dada do, should keep his hands off art.

But to seek and to see in Dada an achievement that "enriches our conventional approach to making paintings," or "a great many important ideas," as A. Behne does, is already the manifestation of a certain intellectual wretchedness, a perversity, and a lust for sensation.

"Staatsaktion gegen Dadaisten" [excerpt]
ANONYMOUS
Vorwärts — Berlin, 21 April 1921

. . . On Wednesday, the writer Johannes Baader (known as "Oberdada"), the art-dealer Dr. Buchard, the painter George Grosz, the writer Wieland Herzfelde, and the painter Rudolf Schlichter appeared before the II Regional Court's Criminal Division, for insult to the federal army.

The Dadaists' exhibition—"The First International Dada Fair"—was the basis for the prosecution charges. This exhibition was predominantly characterized by persiflage and humor, with militarism being one, among many, of its targets. . . . There was also a portfolio of the highly talented artist George Grosz, entitled *God with Us* [Gott mit uns]. . . . In nine sheets of the highest artistic value, the portfolio presented a grim satire on the excesses of militarism. These drawings are a caricature creation of utmost weight and should be put on the same level with the great historical caricatures. . . .

. . . Of course the prosecutor was only able to see these caricatures as an insult to the German armed forces. Captain Matthäi, who visited the exhibition, was insulted and initiated the trial. . . .

The court sentenced the defendant Grosz, who was deemed an uncontrollable artist, to a fine of 300 marks, Herzfelde to a fine of 600 marks and the rest of the defendants were acquitted. The court also ordered the confiscation and destruction of the plates and molds, which were to be handed over to the Minister of Defense, until the authorization for publication was granted.

. . . Every single piece of paper in that portfolio holds more art than in the whole of the Siegessäule because of which a special court shed such bitter tears. All art-interested circles should protest against the fact that because of a few monocle-wearing men and their excessive sensibility, a work of art will be destroyed that our contemporaries have the right to see and know.

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Erste Russische Kunstausstellung *The First Russian Art Exhibition*

Berlin, 1922

LOCATION AND DATES
Galerie van Diemen, Unter den Linden 21, Berlin,
15 October–c. 31 December 1922

ORGANIZER
Russischen Kommissariat für Volksbildungswesen und Kunst
(Russian Commissariat for the People's Enlightenment and Art)

ITINERARY
Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, Spring 1923

ARTISTS
Natan Altman, Yury Annenkov, Alexander Archipenko, Abram Arkhipov, A. Arnshtam, Naum Aronson, Vladimir Baranoff-Rossiné, Belajew, Alexandre Benois, Xenia Boguslavskaya, Boltschakow/Botschkow, Ossip Bras, Lev Bruni, Varvara Bubnova, Evgeniy Bukovetsky, David Burliuk, Marc Chagall, Ivan Chekmazov, Yakov Chernikov, Chochriakow, Nikolai Denisovsky, Djegin, Alexander Drewin, Veniamin Eiges, Engel, Vera Ermolaeva, Alexandra Exter, Robert Falk, Maria Favorskaya, German Fedorov, Fedor Fedorovsky, Pavel Filonov, Naum Gabo, Gambarow, Alexander Gaush, Aleksandr Gerasimov, Igor Grabar, Nikolai Grigoriev, Alexei Grishenko, Vera Idelson, Karl Ioganson, Iwanow, Anna Kagan, Wassily Kandinsky, Adrian Kaplun, Alexey Karew, Ivan Kliun, Gustav Klucis, Stepan Kolesnikov, Kolzow, Vasili Komardenkov, Petr Konchalovsky, Boris Korolyov, Konstantin Korovin, Vladimir Koslinskij, Lubov Kozintzeva, Nikolai Krasovsky, Aleksei Kravchenko, Kreitor, Vladimir Krinsky, Kruglow, Nicolai Krymov, Ivan Kudriashov, Kukryniksy (Mikhail Kupriyanov), Nikolai Kul'bin, Aleksander Kuprin, Pavel Kusnetsov, Boris Kustodiev, Nikolai Lapshin, Anton Lavinsky, Vladimir Lebedev, Mikhael Leblan, Mikhail Ledantiu, Aristarkh

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EXHIBITION CATALOG

Erste Russische Kunstausstellung. Foreword by David Sterenberg, essays by Arthur Holitscher and Dr. Edwin Redslob, and an unsigned introduction. Berlin: Internationale Arbeiterhilfe, 1922. Catalogs for the traveling exhibition include: *Erste Russische Kunstausstellung*, additional introduction by Willem Steenhoff, Amsterdam.

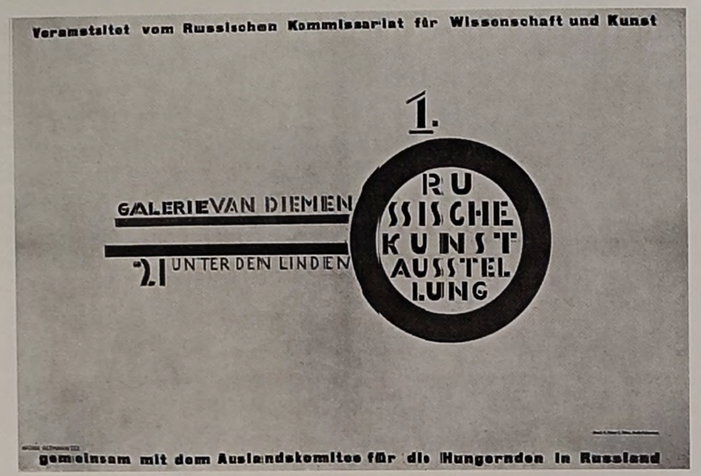
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Number of artists: c. 154
Number of works: c. 593
Total attendance: c. 15,000

Even though a placard in the 1920 Berlin Dada Fair applauded "the machine art of Tatlin," and Raoul Hausmann put his collage entitled *Tatlin Lives at Home*, 1920, in the show, the Germans knew very little about what Vladimir Tatlin was doing or about recent work by other Russian artists. With an international boycott of the Soviet state in place since 1917, the only source of information about the radical art being made there was a single account by a young Russian journalist. This was to change in 1922, when Germany finally recognized the Soviet government, and the Commissariat for the People's Enlightenment and Art, headed by Anatoliy Lunacharsky, sent "The First Russian Art Exhibition" to Berlin.

That exhibition presented a broad range of work, including germinal Socialist Realism, but what elicited the greatest response among both artists and the public were pieces associated with the revolutionary avant-garde: Suprematist paintings by Kasimir Malevich and his students, advanced theater designs, and experimental constructed sculptures by Alexander Rodchenko and other members of OBMOKhU (Society of Young Artists), which had been exhibited the previous year in Moscow. There even were sales—with profits going to Russian famine relief—as dealers and collectors became interested in this work so new to the market. The American collector Katherine Dreier purchased, for example, Malevich's *The Knife Grinder*, 1912, for 180,000 marks, or about $41 at the time.

The abstract paintings of El Lissitzky—who designed the exhibition catalog cover—garnered much attention. Lissitzky had arrived in Berlin at the end of December 1921 and would remain in the West until 1925. Having come out of Malevich's group UNOVIS (Affirmers of the New Art), Lissitzky was committed to employing the new abstraction to utopian social ends, and through publications and lectures he became a primary conduit of information and theory. He also collaborated with European artists Theo van Doesburg and Hans Richter to develop an international Constructivist movement.


Veranstaltet vom Russischen Kommissariat für Wissenschaft und Kunst
1.
GALERIE VAN DIEMEN
21 UNTER DEN LINDEN
RUSSISCHE KUNST AUSSTELLUNG
gemeinsam mit dem Auslandskomitee für die Hungernden in Russland

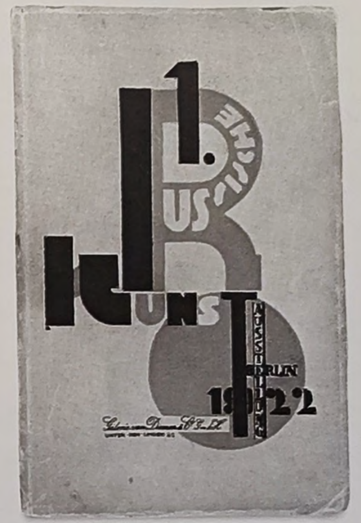
↖ Poster for "The First Russian Art Exhibition," designed by Russian artist Natan Altman, one of the organizers. A notice at the bottom of the poster explains that the exhibition benefited the All-Russian Committee to Aid the Hungry. Much of the work was for sale by the Soviet state, which had, in most cases, purchased the works directly from the artists. (However, the state did not make available seminal works by Kasimir Malevich and Vladimir Tatlin.)

← At the Galerie van Diemen, from left: exhibition organizer and artist David Sterenberg (seated); D. Maryanov, representative of the Soviet state security organization; artists Altman and Naum Gabo; and Friedrich Lürz, director of the gallery. The exhibition took place in three rooms on the ground floor of the Galerie van Diemen, which usually displayed historical works. The Russian exhibition was part of the gallery's new programming for modern art. Among the works pictured are Gabo's metal sculpture *Constructed Torso* (far left), paintings by Sterenberg, including *Vase* (partial view, second from right, behind Gabo), and a sculpture by Alexander Archipenko (on pedestal, rear).

→ Draft by El Lissitzky for the cover of the catalog cover for "The First Russian Art Exhibition," Berlin, 1922.

→→ Cover of the catalog, designed by El Lissitzky, 1922. The catalog includes a foreword by Sterenberg (translation, p. 211) and essays by Dr. Edwin Redslob, Minister of Cultural Affairs in Germany, writer Arthur Holitscher, and an unsigned introduction. The catalog lists 593 works by approximately 150 artists and is organized by medium, including sections devoted to sculpture, architecture and theater maquettes, posters, prints, and decorative works. Some entries represent series of works, so more works were exhibited than were listed in the catalog.

↘ Spread from the paintings section of the catalog showing entries for works by, among others, Wassily Kandinsky, nos. 79–81 (Kandinsky was also a member of the organizing committee); Ivan Kliun, nos. 82–83; El Lissitzky, nos. 120–122 (including two Proun works); and Malevich, nos. 123–127, including *White on White* and *The Knife Grinder*. The latter was one of several works purchased from the show by American collector Katherine Dreier, who, with Marcel Duchamp and Man Ray, cofounded the Société Anonyme in 1920, an organization devoted to collecting, exhibiting, and promoting modern art. Dreier also purchased works in the show by Nadezhda Udaltsova and Liubov Popova, among others, that became part of the collection of the Société.



GAUSCH
46 Sommer
47 Landschaft
48 Regentag
49 Feuerwerk

GERASSIMOW
50 Landschaft
51 Alte Frau

GRABAR
52 Letzte Strahlen
53 Aepfel
54 Landschaft
55 Landschaft
56 Früchte

GRIGORJEW N.
57 Baum

GRISCHTSCHENKO
58 Landschaft

IDELSON
59 Stilleben

IWANOW
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61 Stilleben
62 Stilleben
63 Stilleben
64 Landschaft

JAKULOW
65 Komposition
66 Dame im Elevator
67 Dame mit Fächer

JOUKOWSKI
68 Mitternacht
69 Interieur
70 Im Mai

71 Vergangenes
72 Herbstweg
73 Winter

JUDIN
74 Komposition
75 Kubismus

JUON
76 Landschaft
77 Alte Frau

KAGAN
78 Komposition

KANDINSKI
79 Komposition
80 Komposition
81 Komposition

KLUN
82 Suprematismus
83 Suprematismus

KLUTZIS
84 Konstruktion

KONTSCHALOWSKI
85 Stilleben
86 Stilleben
87 Portrait
88 Heuernte

KOROWIN
89 Schneelandschaft
90 Hausmusik
91 Träumerei
92 Abend
93 Mädchen
94 Stilleben
95 Veranda

KREITOR
96 Stilleben

KRUMOW
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102 Stilleben

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103 Stilleben
104 Landschaft

KUSTODIEW
105 Frau am Samowar
106 Die Braut

LAPSCHIN
107 Portrait
108 Stilleben
109 Landschaft

LEBEDIEW
110 Portrait

LEBLAN
111 Herbst
112 Winter

LEDANTIU
113 Automobilkurve
114 Pferdekopf

LENTULOW
115 Portrait
116 Landschaft
117 Zwei Frauen
118 Stilleben
119 Landschaft

LISSITZKY
120 Stadt

121 Proun 2c
122 Proun 19d

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123 Suprematismus
124 Suprematismus
125 Suprematismus
126 Weiß auf weiß
127 Messerschleifer

MANISSON
128 Kinder
129 Alter Mann

MASCHKOW
130 Stilleben
131 Stilleben
132 Stilleben
133 Landschaft
134 Blumen

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135 Komposition
136 Konstruktion
137 Farbige Konstruktion

MEDWIEDJEW
138 Beim Dreschen
139 Dorf

MORAWOW
140 Dekabristen

MORGUNOW
141 Stilleben
142 Stilleben
143 Kubismus

NASARETZKAJA
144 Stilleben

NESTEROW
145 Die Alten

Erste Russische Kunstausstellung in Berlin

← "The First Russian Art Exhibition in Berlin," *Sichel und Hammer* (Berlin), no. 1, 1922. The exhibition received considerable attention in the German and Russian press, including this article in *Sichel und Hammer*, the predecessor of the German communist illustrated journal *Arbeiter Illustrierte Zeitung*. The article reproduces the catalog essay by Arthur Holitscher and includes an essay by David Sterenberg. Also reproduced are works by (clockwise from top) Zhukovsky (spelled here Joskowski), Sterenberg, Natan Altman, and Naum Gabo.

↓ Russian organizers of "The First Russian Art Exhibition" with Dutch officials outside the second, and last, venue of the exhibition, Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, spring 1923. The poster for the exhibition is visible on the brick wall of the museum.

→ One of four rooms at the Stedelijk Museum devoted to the Russian exhibition. This room included *Corner Counter-Relief* by Vladimir Tatlin (on wall, second from left); Constructivist sculpture by Gabo, including *Constructed Torso* (on pedestal, center), *Constructed Head No. 3* (in the corner, center), and *Constructed Head No. 2* (partial view, on pedestal, far right); two *Spatial Constructions* (mobiles) by Alexander Rodchenko, including *Spatial Construction no. 12* (partial view, far right, top); and works by El Lissitzky.

← Cover of *Zenit* (Zagreb/Belgrade), no. 17–18, September–October 1922. This special issue dedicated to Russian art, with a cover by El Lissitzky, was published a month prior to the opening of "The First Russian Art Exhibition" in Berlin. *Zenit* was an avant-garde journal in circulation from 1921 to 1926 and edited by Yugoslav critic and writer Ljubomir Micić. It focused on advanced central European art and culture, particularly Balkan developments.

↓ First issue of *Veshch'/Gegenstand/Objet* (Berlin), no. 1–2, March–April 1922. El Lissitzky cofounded this journal with Russian writer Ilya Ehrenburg; the articles were published in Russian, German, and French, and covered both Russian and Western art, literature, architecture, and other cultural topics. (Translation, p. 212.)

Erste Russische Kunstausstellung [exh. cat.]
Foreword
DAVID STERENBERG
Berlin, 1922
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During the blockade, the Russian artists made efforts—through appeals, manifests, etc.—to establish a connection with their comrades in the West. Only this present show, though, can be described as the first true step toward a rapprochement. With this exhibition we seek to introduce Western Europe to everything that is apt to shed light on the creative achievements of Russian art during the years of war and revolution. Russian art is still very young. The broad masses had the opportunity to get closer to it only after the October Revolution, and thus to infuse the official and dead art—recognized as the *Grand Art* in Russia and other countries—with new life. Simultaneously, the Revolution opened new perspectives to Russia's creative forces: it enabled the artist to take his creations out into places and streets, thus providing him with new ideas. The decoration of the cities, whose character had completely changed due to the Revolution, and the demands for new architecture naturally created the need for new constructive forms. Most importantly, the artists were not only working for and by themselves, each hidden in their corner, but entered into close contact with the broad masses, which avidly absorbed their propositions, sometimes with keen enthusiasm, sometimes with sharp criticism. That was the litmus test of Russian art. Some artists who did not pass the test fell immediately into oblivion. Others managed to reinforce their position and became stronger. They were no longer content with a piece of canvas, and rejected the stone coffins called houses. Undoubtedly they would have won their battle to design an environment for the new human being, but the blockade and the war made the realization of this goal almost impossible.

The majority of artistic output during the early years of the Revolution was devoted to the decoration of public places. Since it would not make sense to erect these works in a gallery, they are not included here. What is included here are works of different artistic streams that most recently have forcefully come to the fore in Russia. The works in the leftist group illustrate the experimental efforts that preceded the new construction of art. In a similar way, those directions are represented here in works that strive to convey optical impressions. The artists of the following Russian artistic associations can be seen in this exhibition: the Association of Russian Artists (uniting the artists of the "old school"), The World of Art (Mir Iskusstva), the Jack of Diamonds (Bubnovy Valet), the Impressionists, and furthermore the Federation of the leftist groups (Cubists, Suprematists, and Constructivists). In addition to these, there are also those artists on view whose creative temperament does not fit into any framework. However, they are of extraordinary importance for the development of Russian art. Finally, there are posters on exhibit from the time of the civil war, works from the national porcelain factory, and pieces by art school students. Most of these students are farmers and workers. We hope this first attempt will not be the last, that our comrades from the West, whom we look forward to seeing in Moscow and Petrograd, will not keep us waiting long.

"Berliner Ausstellungen" [excerpt]
CURT BAUER
Der Cicerone — Leipzig/Berlin, 1922
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. . . The opening of "The First Russian Art Exhibition" in the new rooms at the Galerie van Diemen, at 21 Unter den Linden, is to be welcomed as an event of great importance. It was a particularly good idea to introduce into this gallery for older art, positioned at the heart of the city's commercial district, a permanent display of good modern works. Foreigners, who are nowadays especially keen to buy, will thus have the opportunity to acquire art of high quality instead of the usual, expensive kitsch—a circumstance that will in and of itself raise the profile of German art abroad. This first exhibition to be organized by the Russian Commissariat for Art and Science testifies to a notable tolerance for diverse tendencies in art. A fair amount of space is given even to the Academicists, such as Vasnetsov, Moravov, and Arkhipov, who happily now appear rejuvenated. The Impressionists astonish us with their colorful freshness. Zhukovsky's landscapes and interiors, Malavin's rendering of figures in rhythmic movement, Korovin's tender, piquant application of paint have forfeited nothing of their appeal—on the contrary, everywhere one detects a more vigorous spirit. This is also true of the "Jack of Diamonds" group, the Russian Cézannists, composed of Rozhdestvensky, Kusnetsov, and Falk, among others. A strong French influence is evident in the work of Grabar, Konchalovsky, and Lentulov. Among the Expressionists, it is Chagall who most attracts our attention: we have found him deeply affecting ever since he turned to the depiction of Russian peasant life. In his motifs he is entirely Russian, and yet in his mode of expression he has become more of a European, while Filonov's Expressionism is more typically and idiosyncratically Russian. A stronger distinction between German and Russian art first really emerges, however, when we examine the latest trends. In Russia, it seems, the response to planarity is stronger than the feeling for space. As a result, Cubism has acquired only a few representatives, swiftly metamorphosing into Suprematism, a non-objective planar art, with Malevich and Rodchenko as its most outstanding exponents. Kandinsky, who is not exactly shown in the best light here, also belongs within this group. Dynamism, on the other hand, has developed into so-called Constructivism, which seeks to give material form to the principles of mechanics, and which has been infused with social values by the spirited painter Altman. Sterenberg has arrived at a very refined form of art, whereby he shows that purely painterly problems can be derived even from objective recollections.

The art of the Russian Revolution set out to pursue each of the modern theories of art to its logical conclusion. We must, however, recognize that what might here easily strike us as a sort of laboratory art was, in fact, originally devised as ambitious decoration produced on a grand scale. It is nonetheless the case that the eye of the Russian people is inherently receptive to non-objective planar ornamentation. It is only through grasping this predisposition that one is also able to understand the art of the Russian Revolution. The same is true of Russian sculpture, within which the Constructivist Gabo is a pioneer of great originality, and some of whose work has a folkloristic stamp. Archipenko, meanwhile, who is a very familiar figure here, has petrified into an empty jumble of forms. Of particular interest are the designs for the stage: Altman's models for a production of "Uriel Acosta." There is, in addition, the output of the Petersburg State Porcelain Factory, some of it very original and the work of

modernist artists, and in addition, the display by students from the working class also reveals an early commitment by the Russian people to the elements of modern art. . . .

"The Blockade of Russia Moves Towards Its End"

ILYA EHRENBURG AND EL LISSITZKY

Veshch', no. 1–2 — Berlin, March–April 1922

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The appearance of *Veshch'* ('Object') is an indication of the fact that the exchange of 'objects' between young Russian and West European masters has begun. Seven years of separate existence have shown that the community of the tasks and aims of art in different countries is not something that exists by chance, nor is it inspired by dogma or fashion, but rather by an inherent quality of the mature human race. From now on, art, while preserving all local characteristics and symptoms, is international. The founders of a new guild of painters are making sure that the links are securely established between Russia, which experienced the most powerful revolution, and the West, with its miserable, post-war Black Monday mood; in doing this, they are ignoring all distinctions between psychological, economic, and purely national art. 'Object' provides the link between two adjacent lines of communication.

We are standing in the dawn of a great creative era. Naturally there is reaction and bourgeois obstinacy on all sides, and this is still effective enough, not only in Europe but also in revolutionized Russia. But the total exertions of orthodoxy can at best only retard the process of constructing new forms of existence and mastery. The days of destroying and beleaguering and undermining are behind us. Therefore 'Object' will use up a minimum amount of space in doing battle with the followers of the Academy.

We consider the negative tactics of the 'Dadaists', who are as similar to the early futurists of the pre-war era as one pea is to another, to be anachronistic. The time has come to build on open ground. Whatever is exhausted will die anyway, without assistance from us; for land that is lying fallow needs not a programme or a school of thought, but simply work. In this day and age it is just as laughable as it is naïve to still 'want to throw Pushkin overboard'. In the flow of forms there are binding laws, and what the masters of modern times are afraid of is not how they are ever going to revive benumbed forms, but how to conform to the eternal laws of clarity, economy, and legality. 'Object' does not reject the past in the present. Therefore the immediate remains of yesterday's transition period are our enemies. I mean symbolism, impressionism, and so on.

We consider the triumph of the constructive method to be essential for our present. We find it not only in the new economy and in the development of industry but also in the psychology of our contemporaries in art.

'Object' will champion constructive art, whose mission is not, after all, to embellish life but to organize it.

We have named our periodical 'Object', because to us art means nothing other than the creation of new 'objects'. Therefore we are dedicated to pressing for realism, for weight, for volume, for earth. However, one should not think for that reason that by objects we mean explicitly useful objects.

Naturally it is our opinion that useful objects produced in the factories—aeroplanes, perhaps, or automobiles—are also the products of true art; but we do not wish to see artistic creation restricted to these useful objects alone. Every organized piece of work—whether it be a house, a poem, a painting—is a practical 'object', not intended to estrange people from life, but on the contrary to call upon them to take part in its organization. Thus we have nothing in common with those poets who announce in verse that they will not write any more verse, or painters who use the picture as a means of publicizing their renunciation of painting. Basic utilitarianism is far from our thoughts. 'Object' regards poetry, plastic form, drama, as essential 'objects'.

'Object' will follow with the closest attention the mutual relations between the new art and the past, in all its multiform manifestations (science, politics, technology, customs, and so on). We observe that the development of art in the course of recent years has been influenced by various phenomena lying outside the category of so-called 'pure art'. 'Object' will, however, investigate examples from industry, new inventions, colloquial and newspaper parlance, sport—movements, and so on—in short, everything which can be regarded as material directly relevant to every master who is consciously creating at the present time. 'Object' stands equally aloof from all political parties, because it is not occupied with the problems of politics but of art. This does not mean, however, that we are in favor of an art which stands outside of life and is apolitical on principle. On the contrary, *we cannot imagine a creation of new forms in an art unrelated to the change in social form* and, it is obvious that all those in sympathy with 'Object' belong to the young creative forces in Europe and Russia who are creating new 'objects'. The new collective, international style is a product of communal creation. All who participate in its development are fellow-campaigners and friends of 'Object'.

The fever which exists for building, as we are currently experiencing it, is so great that it will be found to exist for all work. We are not founding any sects, we are not acquiescing in substitutes for the collective, in the shape of various movements and schools. We are endeavouring to sum up the efforts of all who are genuinely willing to work and not just to live on the revenue of the past generations.

However, those who are not used to working but only to admiring the work of others, those who do not wish to create but only to use the creations of others, will find 'Object' trite and paltry.

In its pages one should seek neither philosophical guidance nor refined eroticism. 'Object' is an impartial mouthpiece of opinion, a herald of technology, a price-list for new 'objects', and a rough draft of objects still to be produced. From the parched, stifling atmosphere of a Russia that has been squeezed dry and from the congealed, numbing atmosphere of a Europe that is semiconscious, the battle cry rings out.

No more declarations and counter-declarations! Arise! Create 'objects'!

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From The First Russian Show: A Commemoration of the Van Diemen Exhibition, Berlin, 1922 *(London: Annely Juda Fine Art, 1983), 73–74. The translation was provided by Thames and Hudson.*

"Die Erste Russische Kunstausstellung"

[excerpt]

G.G.L. [GERTRUD ALEXANDER]

Die Rote Fahne — Berlin, 17 October 1922

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. . . These first recent works of art to reach Germany from the blockaded Russia prove, in their emphatically life-affirming character, in their colorful and eagerly innovative elements, the truth of what is claimed in the legend on the beautiful red flag hanging at the entrance: out of Socialist soil new, great art and a new, creative, all-informing culture can be created. The exhibition is overwhelmingly rich and presents, alongside splendid works of the older schools, painting, sculpture, and other, new forms of creation, including designs for the stage, infused with all the modern trends, in addition to the output of the art schools set up for workers and peasants, which should be of particular interest to German workers. . . . Here is evidence of the overflowing artistic imagination of a young people, just as we see throughout the exhibition, the powerful life- and joy-affirming will of a self-liberating class that speaks with its own passionate voice. . . .

"Die Ausstellung der Russen"

PAUL WESTHEIM

Das Kunstblatt — Berlin, November 1922

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This exhibition is a disappointment, and at the same time it is one of the most interesting artistic surveys that we have had for years.

It is a disappointment for anyone who seeks something "lasting," something that is of our time and is capable of growing into timelessness. It is interesting, because it affords a unique glimpse of an intellectual tussle with problems of artistic design inevitably raised by minds for which the Future can mean only one thing: a radical break with anything and everything that belongs to the past.

This future art that is to be created does not as yet exist in Russia (any more than the future form of the economy or of society exists). But the work displayed on the walls of this exhibition shows that people are working with fanatical zeal toward something that is infinitely remote, something that may turn out to be a mere phantom or else, possibly, and in a highly specific sense, a Renaissance of art.

So it might be said that what young Russian art has to offer is not an exhibition of art so much as an *exhibition of artistic problems*.

These Russian artists—like all others in Russia—are driven by a fierce *compulsion to create anew*. In one way, this is a blessing; in others, it is a fateful burden that only courage, character, and extraordinary creative strength can master. To what extent these qualities are present, how much staying power is really present, is not for us to determine. That is a task for posterity, which will be in a position to judge the process by its outcome.

It is the French who find it easiest to make art at present (which is not to say that the work done in France necessarily sums up the expression of the age). In France, a renewal of art associated with the names of Cézanne and Seurat has created a basis for further evolution while maintaining continuity with tradition. At the opposite extreme from ancient France, which still has (or seems to have) enough vitality to renew itself from its own inner resources, there is a revolutionary Russia, which rejects all tradition on principle: virgin territory for art, ruled by the idea of building everything new, from scratch. An implicit idea presides over the Russian world: that everything has yet to be and must be done. This instills into creative work a freedom and audacity unknown in Europe for centuries past. The question, of course, is whether our continent still has the strength to handle such freedom and such audacity. It and the new art might well relapse into anarchy together. The country that is finding it hardest at the moment is the one in the middle: ourselves, in other words. We have no tradition on which to rely, because our tradition has been interrupted too often; at the same time, we have too much to lose—in art, as in other respects—by abruptly sacrificing our past for the sake of an uncertain future. With us, the new is a continuation and transformation of the old. In art (as in politics), this precludes radical decisions; it also leads too readily, and too often, to cautious applications of color wash. It is no accident that our artistic evolution has impelled us toward Romanticism. Nor is it an accident that we have to put out feelers first in one direction and then in another; and that issues such as that of a new Naturalism are not only possible but actually require to be brought to a head.

Russia is a vast country, and there is a great diversity in the Russian soul—as there is in the German, the French, and the human soul everywhere. The exhibition, which sets out to offer a cross-section, demonstrates—with a candor that is not exactly typical of official exhibitions—that it might be well to avoid glib generalizations. It is true, however, that one highly specific form of Russianness in art currently monopolizes our attention—although this may of course be entirely our own problem. There exists a Russian Salon art, of the Glaspalast type, in which the artist (Arkhipov) encapsulates the New Age (in the spirit of Defregger) by painting peasants in a village who cluster around a small boy and marvel at the said child's ability to read them the latest political news out of the newspaper. And then, as Sternberg has already shown, there is a Russian Cézannism, personified by Falk and by the astonishingly sophisticated painter Rozhdestvensky; there is a Russian variant of Expressionism, in the *Bubnovy Valet* group; and there is a Russian Cubism, which has produced two sculptors with a structural sense that is all their own, Archipenko and Tsalit. And, finally, there is revolutionary art, the main surprise and talking point of the exhibition, represented by the Suprematists and Constructivists.

Once before in the pages of this journal (1919), a passage from Dostoevsky has been cited: "As soon as we Russians have reached the shore, and have brought ourselves to believe that it really is the shore, we at once begin to look forward to the ultimate frontier. Why is this? If one of us is converted to Catholicism, he immediately turns Jesuit, and the blackest Jesuit of them all; if he becomes an atheist, he will immediately call for belief in God to be eradicated, by force if necessary." This "sudden fanaticism," this total incapacity for moderation, this tendency to take everything to extremes, explains a great deal—in this exhibition, as elsewhere. Take Malevich, for example. He is a great believer in the need to "simplify." So Malevich simplifies. More and more is removed from the picture area. First, of course, all representation of objects. Then color. All that remains is a single contrast between black and white: an abstract form, a black quadrilateral or a black circle on a white ground. And even this is not the ultimate simplification. Malevich then dispenses with black and paints his celebrated work, *White on White*. On a white ground there is nothing but white. Simplification has been taken to such an extreme that nothing remains within the white frame but an empty expanse of white. This takes intellectual experimentation as far as it can go. "To become an atheist," says Dostoevsky in the passage just quoted, "is so easy for a Russian! More than for anyone else in the whole world. Nor do Russians turn into ordinary atheists; far from it. Atheism to them becomes a new faith. They believe in it, without even noticing that they are believing in a zero." Perhaps this is the psycholog-

ical background to that white painting? There have been other forms of "simplification." We have Liebermann's risky and—as I am increasingly convinced—questionable assertion that drawing is an art of omission. We can tell what Liebermann meant by omission if we look at his own way of drawing. This shows, may I say, some evidence that he proclaimed his thesis with considerable mental reservations. Malevich, the Russian, takes the word dead literally; with the result that he ends up as a believer in zero. For, quite simply, to paint in "white on white" is to give up painting. The logical conclusion would be to disown art altogether and give up the whole thing. And, if my information is correct, this is precisely what Malevich has done: he has laid down his palette and brushes, turned Catholic, and taken up Theosophy. Some of his disciples, and others—a whole movement, in fact—have sought salvation through something called "Production Art," using metal, wood, and other materials to make constructions that are neither engineering nor art handicraft—all "utilitarian properties" being rejected on principle. From these, nevertheless, a wide highway leads—especially given the theory of "Uniting Art With Life"—to applied arts: to posters, ceramics, glassware, and stage design, for which the Russians have always had a special gift, as can now be seen all over again in the work of Altman, Tatlin, Exter, Boguslavskaya, Yakulov, and others.

In the last few decades, "construction" is another term of artistic debate that some have tried to take literally. Just as the mechanical engineer projects plans and elevations onto a two-dimensional surface, so Lissitzky projects *Constructions*. But drawing is an abstraction in itself. Accordingly, Tatlin and others after him have started to build their Constructions with real materials: iron, sheet metal. This, again, is a negation of painting, and in its way a tangible proof of the "hatred of painting" that I once identified as a recurrent phenomenon in the latest generation of artists. It is work that craves to be treated as 'engineering," and yet ultimately it is neither more nor less than the "romance of engineering." In the course of all this conceptual experimentation and exploration, the two-dimensional pictorial space became suspect, on the grounds that it involved an illusion. The cry went up for pictorial space to be developed into real space. Gabo constructs this space out of diagonally intersecting planes of iron or celluloid, thus converting the pictorial image into a relief hung inside the frame. He then extends the same principle to sculpture, which no longer confines itself to molding a volume but aspires to be "not only static but dynamic." In other words, the aim is for sculpture to encompass and mold space. This recalls the experiments of Belling, except that Belling's use of scale enables him to make real use of the dimension of space.

From the viewpoint of our Western artistic culture, these issues, experiments, and endeavors have little or nothing to do with "Art" in our (or should I say in the old) sense of the term. Just imagine how a "connoisseur" like Friedländer, or an amateur like the elder Vollard, would react to such statements as these. Seen from the crowning heights of our Western artistic culture, all of this is terribly primitive. There is no need—or so it will be said—for the art student in our culture to trouble his head with such matters. Centuries of tradition have supplied us with tried and tested methods of artistic creation; the disciple need only adopt them and fill them with his own individual content. Learning to paint is simply a matter of gaining familiarity with the traditional craft skills. Such is the Alexandrian state of ripeness and overripeness that is allegedly imperiled by all those "Barbarians" in the East. They, for their part, have in mind the possibility, indeed the necessity, of giving art a new Archaic Period. They see it as their mission to set about their work afresh, empty-handed; to begin with basic concepts and thus conceivably achieve something that may be different in its principles from anything done before. Hence the fanaticism with which all conclusions and solutions are rejected; hence the intense commitment with which the most elementary issues are tackled. Artists are still wrestling with basic grammatical concepts; language itself is still a thing of the far distant future. Color, for instance, is not yet a medium of expression; it is treated regarded as a material, a study material. Paint is applied to a surface. Rodchenko paints a small quadrilateral—evenly, with intelligent craftsmanship—in glowing crimson: a task of the kind that is set in our craft schools as part of the final examination for apprentice house painters. It is necessary to achieve some clarity as to the *facture* value of such an area of paint. A matte paint surface is set against a glossy surface, and a smooth one against a rough one. As an experiment, an area painted black is juxtaposed with another consisting of black paper stuck to the surface. And so on. From such contrasts, some artists are even now extracting possibilities of pictorial construction. Sternberg, who has retained some sense of the "pictorial image," and Altman, who has already returned to "representation," have already gone farther.

As to the actual artistic outcome of this experimentation, the exhibition tells us nothing. And herein lies the disappointment. It may be said that it is too soon to expect more. After all, artists have had no more than a few years for a task that may well take generations. And look at the circumstances under which they have had to work! But it is hard to gainsay those who demand to see something more than experimentation. They, too, have right on their side, in withholding their commitment from anything so uncertain. What might come of it all? In the end, it is a matter of faith.

There is no denying that the driving force here is the intellect. Much, though not all, of this is brainwork. Too much so. There are also many different dialects in it: an impression that is reinforced as soon as you get into discussion with individual artists. They have a marked tendency to refer back to first principles, and this sometimes degenerates into dogmatism or even scholasticism. It almost seems that they have *more to say than to show*: that their theories and options, manifestos and programs, arguments and theses, have more to teach us than an exhibition like this one. The intellectual subsoil from which all of this grows is curious, and is not so readily dismissed out of hand as a stack of images or of what might become images. The composition *White on White* (if it can be called a composition) means nothing as an "image"; and yet, it seems to me, there is much to be learned from an intellectual situation that leads logically to this.

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"The Exhibition of Russian Artist Russen," in Timothy O. Benson and Éva Forgács, eds., Between Worlds: A Sourcebook of Central European Avant-Gardes, 1910–1930 (Los Angeles: Los Angeles County Museum of Art; Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2002), 405–8. Translation by David Britt.

"Der Staatsanwalt schüzt das Bild"

ADOLF BEHNE

Die Weltbühne — Berlin, 23 November 1922

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The Russian exhibit in the [Van Dieman] Gallery provides an excellent documentation of the transcendence of the image. That Kandinsky's paintings have been hung on the final wall is probably a concession to (mistaken) German exhibits of modern Russian art. In no sense is Kandinsky's abstract canvas the last word in Russian painting. The leading role has not been played by Kandinsky, still less by [Marc] Chagall (who has a very weak painting on display here), but by the constructivists, the splendidly represented [Kasimir] Malevich, [Alexander] Rodchenko, [El] Lissitzky, and [Vladimir] Tatlin, [Nathan] Altman, and [Naum] Gabo. The question is no longer whether the Suprematist image is a better or more beautiful image than the impressionist image; rather the question is whether the image as such can continue to supply us with an accepted, fruitful area of work. The image itself is in crisis—not because a couple of painters thought this up but because the modern individual has experienced changes in intellectual structure that alienate one from the image. The image is an aesthetic matter whereas what the radical artists of all nations want is to lend immediate form to reality itself (the Russians call it production art). Soviet Russia was the first to recognize the possibilities inherent in this great new goal and give it free rein; the German "art lover" instead remains stubbornly closed to it (no salon has yet exhibited the German constructivists). This exhibit, the most audacious and richest in productive artistic work that Berlin has seen in a long time—and under what conditions!—is an official exhibit of the People's Commissariat for the Arts and Sciences in Moscow. The Commissariat charged the painter [David] Sterenberg with putting the show together (his works, incidentally, are among the most interesting on display). It is utterly inconceivable that even in a hundred years an official German exhibition would so frankly embrace art, the times, and all that is of current vitality. "We hope," Sterenberg writes in the catalogue, "that our Western comrades, whom we would very much like to see in Moscow and Petrograd, will not keep us waiting long." I can imagine what will be sent to Russia (if anything at all) to represent artistic work in Germany. It will be at least ten years behind the times.

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"On the Russian Exhibition," in Timothy O. Benson and Éva Forgács, eds., Between Worlds: A Sourcebook of Central European Avant-Gardes, 1910–1930 (Los Angeles: Los Angeles County Museum of Art; Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2002), 408. Translation by Don Reneau.

"The Russian Exhibit in Berlin" [excerpt]

LAJOS KASSÁK

Ma — Budapest, December 1922

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. . . The all-Russian exhibition in Berlin, in spite of its great shortcomings, provides a by and large clear balance sheet of the wartime and revolutionary art of Russia.

The European schools of Futurism, Cubism, and Expressionism had still had a chance to seep into the Russian art world and we find in Moscow and Petersburg, as everywhere else in the world, artists who spoke those formal languages. These movements however barely developed here past the stage of art school ateliers. Representative Cubists such as Udalkova, Puni, Posner and others have not added anything to the values produced by the French school. The greatest master of Expressionism, the Russian-born Chagall, has matured his art in Berlin and Paris and has not been able to exert any deeper influence in Russia.

The first consciously new step taken by the young Russian artists may be seen in Suprematism. This is the first movement where the Russian, the Asian power joins the European forces as a truly absolute value that is capable of multiplication. And characteristically its message is, instead of a heaping on, a simplification, by getting rid of every externality deposited by civilization and aesthetics, to dig all the way back down to the essentials. As painters they follow through to the ultimate conclusions, in their forms arriving at basic geometric forms and in their color use at the two basic colors, black and white. Their debut was a revolutionary act. And their simple laws set the stage for the birth (1917) of the entire new generation of Russian artists. Suprematism has drawn the ultimate logical conclusions for painting and has opened the gates toward progress. Suddenly the avenues of possibility multiplied in number and this movement rapidly branched out, enriching itself with new people and values. Malevich is the purest master of Suprematism. He is the source for the departures of the Constructivists and Objectivists. The representatives of these groups are Tatlin, Lissitzky, Rodchenko, Klyun, Drevin, et al.

Shterenberg is one of the Constructivists, but has developed entirely on his own. His paintings depicting naturalistic single objects are infinitely simplified in both form and color. His works, regarding their execution, are the most advanced in the exhibition. Here we must note that in the degree of their technical preparedness this entire generation is wonderfully pure and thorough. There is no evidence whatever of cliché or superficial playfulness.

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"The Russian Exhibition in Berlin" [excerpt]

ERNŐ KÁLLAI

Akasztott Ember — Vienna, 15 February 1923

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. . . The most serious thing among the several shortcomings of the Russian exhibition in Berlin was the fact that it refused to take any stand whatsoever, and settled for providing a neutral survey of the most diverse visual objects, much to the delight of bourgeois democrats and aesthetes. It gave no indication that it had originated in a country going through the most painful struggle of attaining Communism, from where it was dropped into the midst of the luxurious bourgeois environment of Unter den Linden. Those few neat little Soviet posters in the Impressionist style and one or two Soviet emblems on silk or china had the effect of awkward beauty spots modestly hiding among the hundreds of drawings and paintings. For all that, even Herr Ebert, the president of the German pseudo-republic, might well have undertaken the "highest sponsorship" of the exhibition. True, the introductory essays to the catalogue made a few passing references to the revolutionary nature of the new movements and the fact of art having taken to the streets, but it all sounded like apologies and excuses rather than a courageously voiced demand. There was nothing in these writings to provide the exhibition with a backbone of worldview and ethics. The various

movements were aligned into an order connected by the fragile thread of an intent to demonstrate causal connections, instead of the immanent goal of a revolutionary will. The only purpose the Russian exhibition evinced was tactical in nature. It would seem that Lunacharsky and the others did not want to scare away the bourgeois viewers of the exhibition. This would explain why they refrained from any kind of overt revolutionary content. But I still find it incomprehensible that this Russian exhibition has overlooked the problem of proletarian art. Some of the cruder examples of the student work in the exhibition *might* have shown evidence of unpracticed proletarian handiwork. But apart from these few pieces there was not even the slightest allusion to the much-debated critical issues of *proletcult*.

If there *is* a Russian proletarian art, then it was an unpardonable omission not to devote at least as much attention to it as to the lip-smacking still-lives, sensuous nudes, and melting moods of paintings by Kustodiev and others. And if there is no proletarian art in Russia, even then this—for the time being absent—new artistic collective should have been given the role of occupying one extreme pole of the spirit of this exhibition. Even the concept of an as yet nonexistent proletarian art, as the unknown quantity *x*, would have been an important factor in this exhibition, if the introductory texts in the catalogue had paid some attention to the demands, prospects, and obstructions presented by this concept. The Russian cultural commissariat in all probability has plenty of experience in this respect. Here was the opportunity to give an account of the results at a public forum available to all of Europe. It is greatly to be regretted that this opportunity has not been seized.

What did the exhibition salvage from the Russian revolution? A few seething, expressionistic individuals and world-visions possessed of an imagination and a tenacious, form-giving fanaticism that was indeed staggering, and without parallel in today's painting; they recall old-time icons in terror of damnation. But these visions could equally be seen as feverish nightmares of a humanity disoriented by the world war as much as by the revolution. Whereas the works that were indubitably rooted in the revolution were too feeble to offer more than mere psychological illustration.

The exhibition included representative values from every direction, starting with naturalism and Impressionism, through the heritage of Cézanne, all the way to Tatlin's militant spatial Cubism and Constructivism. The entirety of this extensive range was characterized, not so much by a formal dexterity, as by the remarkable and diverse wealth of ability in the handling of material. The Russians never fail to assign an active role to surface textures, always strictly in accordance with the spirit of the given style in question. This passion for taking meticulous trouble with materials is often incidental to the problem of overall form, and may even lead to an obstructive sort of puttering, but when it stays within the necessary limits it has the effect of endowing the work's optical values with an extraordinary intensity. A surface that is differentiated and structured in its material composition is able to radiate into space a much more opulent, flexible, and irresistible dynamics of reflected light than a surface that is arranged only optically.

The facture of Constructivist works gives evidence of the profound, material unity of psychological and logical existence. Even when touched or viewed from very close up, these surfaces are alive with rhythms.

The facture of Russian Constructivism offers interesting evidence that the psychological category of perceiving materials and the logical category of formal observation are not mutually exclusive but in fact are conditional upon each other, and are different but not equally necessary manifestations of artistic vitality. And since the Russian Constructivists (including the Suprematists) pay equal attention to both categories, their works appear alive and actual both in respect of the optical perspective and by virtue of their pure and integral order.

Constructivism, the art of causality disciplined in the service of purposeful life objectives, can be seen in two phases in this exhibition: in two-dimensional planes, and in actual multi-dimensional space. The two-dimensional constructions were in general of a higher quality than the spatial constructions. This was in part certainly due to the fact that from the viewpoint of the formative intention a two-dimensional construction offers far less material resistance and therefore provides more opportunities for the adequate addressing of consciously registered tensions and functions. The great majority of the spatial constructions were in addition hindered in their full resolution by an excessive number of details in the mutually constructive supports of linked parts, resulting in a multitude of forms without any function. They resembled technological objects, but did not perform any technological tasks. Looking past these unsuccessful experiments in technological pseudo-naturalism one could see very few spatial constructions that would pass for real achievements. Medunetsky's triple diagonal construction is alive because it indicates only in a most general manner the axes that give free play to the full swing of its spatial activity.

In this work as well as in Gabo's far more complex model for a glass sculpture the awareness of functionality is the primary creative motivation, rather than formal convention, as in the case of the technological naturalists. Gabo has also attempted a mobile sculpture, the essential form of which is afforded by the optical phenomenon created by motion. In Gabo's mobile sculpture the formal conception is consciously built upon the notion of motion, insofar as it is not only the conveyor but also the result of motion. Further advance from here would lead in the direction of the kinetic lever specified by Kemény and Moholy-Nagy that demands an internal dialectics compared to which the Gabo-type experiments can only be seen as limited and temporary substitutes.

The weakest part of the exhibition consisted of the architectural portions. The few architectural plans and sketches were evidence of an utterly inconsequential romanticism, proving that all the programmatic verbiage of utilitarianism will remain idle talk until we evolve new social necessities of life that will need to be fulfilled by practical architectural work.

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Originally published as "A berlini orosz kiállítás." From Timothy O. Benson and Éva Forgács, eds., Between Worlds: A Sourcebook of Central European Avant-Gardes, 1910–1930 (Los Angeles: Los Angeles County Museum of Art; Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2002), 410–12. Translation by John Bátki.

15

Film und Foto

Stuttgart, 1929

LOCATION AND DATES
Neue Städtische Ausstellungshallen am Interimtheaterplatz (New Exhibition Hall, Interim Theater Square), 18 May–7 July 1929; film program at Den Königsbaulichtspielen (Königsbau Cinema), 13–26 June 1929

ORGANIZER
Deutscher Werkbund

ITINERARY
Kunstgewerbemuseum, Zurich, 28 August–22 September 1929; Kunstgewerbemuseum, Berlin, 19 October–17 November 1929; Gdansk, Poland; Österreichisches Museum, Vienna, 20 February –21 March 1930; Zagreb, Croatia; Ausstellungspark, Munich, June–September 1930 (integrated into the annual "Das Deutsche Lichtbild" [German Photography exhibition]); Tokyo and Osaka

EXHIBITORS
Anonymous, Berenice Abbott, Aerodynamics Institute, Agfa, Atelier Nolte, Eugène Atget, Atlantic Photo Co., Bauhaus, Willi Baumeister, Clara Baur, Herbert Bayer, Irene Bayer, Bayerische Film GmbH, Cecil Beaton, Henri Berssenbrugge, Anne Biermann, Bilddienst, Bildungsverband der Deutschen Buchdrucker, Karl Blossfeldt, Marianne Brandt, Anton Bruehl, Francis Bruguière, Max Burchartz, Johannes Canis, Edmund Collein, Erich Comeriner, Imogen Cunningham, Dmitri Debabov, Derussa (Deutsch-Russische Film Allianz AG), Erhard Dörner, Duoskop-Gesellschaft, Lajos von Ebneth, Otto Einschink, Sergei Mikhailovich Eisenstein, Max Enderlin, Hugo Erfurth, Lotte Errell, Andreas Feininger, Lux Feininger, Werner Feist, Franz Fiedler, Hans Finsler, F. A. Flachslander, Folkwangschulen-Essen, Foto-Cristeller, B. Fuchs, Walter Funkat, Albert Fuss, Lotte Gerson,

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Foto" a valuable view of progressive art in Russia—and
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movements were aligned into an order connected by the fragile thread of an intent to demonstrate causal connections, instead of the immanent goal of a revolutionary will. The only purpose the Russian exhibition evinced was tactical in nature. It would seem that Lunacharsky and the others did not want to scare away the bourgeois viewers of the exhibition. This would explain why they refrained from any kind of overt revolutionary content. But I still find it incomprehensible that this Russian exhibition has overlooked the problem of proletarian art. Some of the cruder examples of the student work in the exhibition *might* have shown evidence of unpracticed proletarian handiwork. But apart from these few pieces there was not even the slightest allusion to the much-debated critical issues of *proletcult*.

If there is a Russian proletarian art, then it was an unpardonable omission not to devote at least as much attention to it as to the lip-smacking still-lives, sensuous nudes, and melting moods of paintings by Kustodiev and others. And if there is no proletarian art in Russia, even then this—for the time being absent—new artistic collective should have been given the role of occupying one extreme pole of the spirit of this exhibition. Even the concept of an as yet nonexistent proletarian art, as the unknown quantity *x*, would have been an important factor in this exhibition, if the introductory texts in the catalogue had paid some attention to the demands, prospects, and obstructions presented by this concept. The Russian cultural commissariat in all probability has plenty of experience in this respect. Here was the opportunity to give an account of the results at a public forum available to all of Europe. It is greatly to be regretted that this opportunity has not been seized.

What did the exhibition salvage from the Russian revolution? A few seething, expressionistic individuals and world-visions possessed of an imagination and a tenacious, form-giving fanaticism that was indeed staggering, and without parallel in today's painting: they recall old-time icons in terror of damnation. But these visions could equally be seen as feverish nightmares of a humanity disoriented by the world war as much as by the revolution. Whereas the works that were indubitably rooted in the revolution were too feeble to offer more than mere psychological illustration.

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EXHIBITION CATALOG

Film und Foto: Internationale Ausstellung des Deutschen Werkbunds (Film and Photo: International Exhibition of the Deutscher Werkbund). Foreword by Dr.-Ing. h. c. Peter Bruckmann, essays by W. Jemtschuschny, Olga Davidovna Kameneva, N. Kaufmann, Hans Richter, Gustaf Stotz, and Edward Weston. Stuttgart: Der Werkbund, 1929.

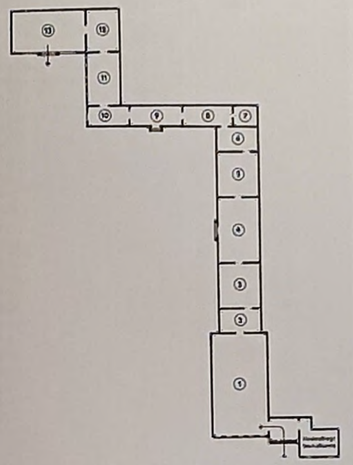
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Number of exhibitors: c. 182
Number of works: c. 1,000
Total attendance: unknown (Stuttgart, c. 10,000 by mid-June)

Organized by the Deutscher Werkbund to present an overview of worldwide developments in the use of photographic and cinema technologies, "Film und Foto: Internationale Ausstellung des Deutschen Werkbunds" (Film and Photo: International Exhibition of the German Association of Craftsmen) can be viewed as both a trade and a fine arts show. Given that the Werkbund, headed by Gustaf Stotz, was an association of architects, designers, and industrialists, this is not surprising. But in merging these two kinds of displays, the exhibition also was very much of its time. The 1920s saw these new varieties of image production come to dominate advertising, the representation of current events, and political propaganda, as well as become more established art forms. With national sections assembled by curators from each country represented—including Edward Steichen and Edward Weston for the United States, El Lissitzky for the Soviet Union, László Moholy-Nagy for Germany, F. T. Gubler and Sigfried Giedion for Switzerland, Piet Zwart for Holland, and Christian Zervos for France—the show brought together the most advanced artistic work and the full range of these new visual technologies.

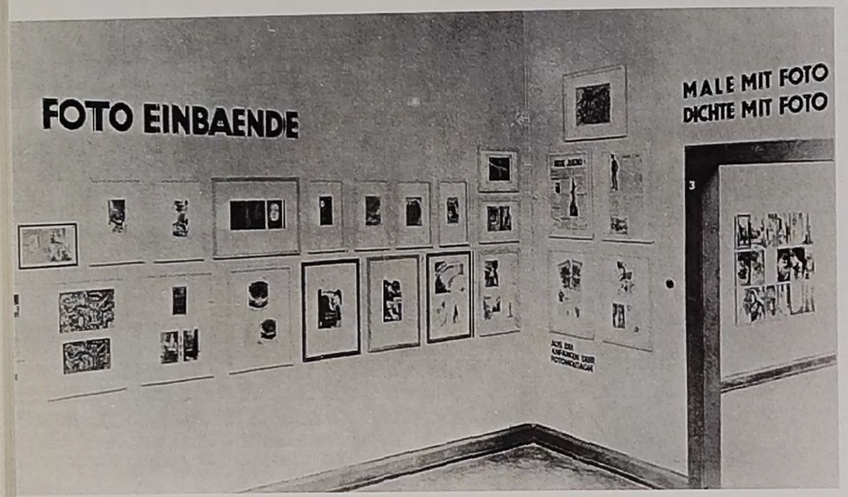
Moholy-Nagy's introductory gallery included not only art photography but also other examples of the new ways of seeing that these imaging technologies had made possible. Collapsing the boundary between fine and applied art, he displayed matted photographs without any texts, bringing together X-rays and other scientific images, newspaper and advertising photographs, and both fine art and anonymous photos. This novel display, which reflected the experimentalism of the photography that he championed, was complemented by Lissitzky's Constructivist design for the Soviet section. Although he did not quite achieve the level of innovative display presented the previous year with his huge, collaged photomurals at the international "Pressa" exhibition in Cologne, Lissitzky's contribution made the Soviet section of "Film und Foto" a valuable view of progressive art in Russia—and one of the last to be seen before the Stalinist gates closed.

← Poster for "Film und Foto," Stuttgart, 1929. The poster indicates the dates and locations of both the photography and film components. The image reproduced on the poster is by the German photojournalist Willi Ruge.



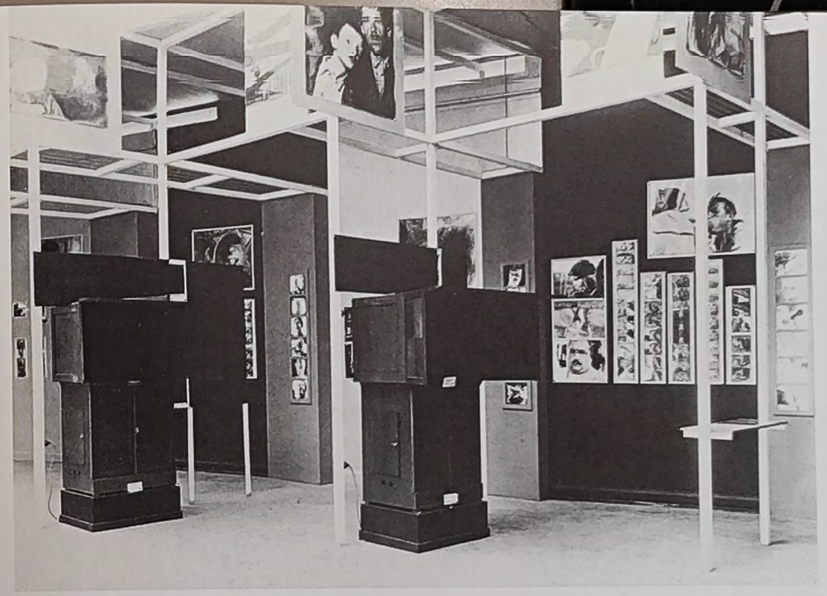
← Floor plan, "Film und Foto," New Exhibition Hall, Interim Theater Square, Stuttgart. More than one thousand works were installed in thirteen rooms. Room 2 featured works by Cami and Sasha Stone; Room 5 exhibited 97 works by László Moholy-Nagy; Room 6 included works by American photographers Anton Bruehl, Imogen Cunningham, Paul Outerbridge, Charles Sheeler, and Edward Steichen; and Room 13 included industrial works by firms such as Dr. Lossen & Co., a German architectural photography company. The remaining rooms contained installations titled "Intelligence and Propaganda," "Science and Technology," and "Photography and Advertising," among others.

↓ Room 1 of the exhibition, curated by Moholy-Nagy. The largest in the exhibition hall, Room 1 began with a historical section that displayed nineteenth-century daguerreotypes from the collection of the German photography historian Erich Stenger. Moholy-Nagy devoted the remainder of the gallery to different genres and techniques of photography, from zoology and advertising to aerial views and photograms.



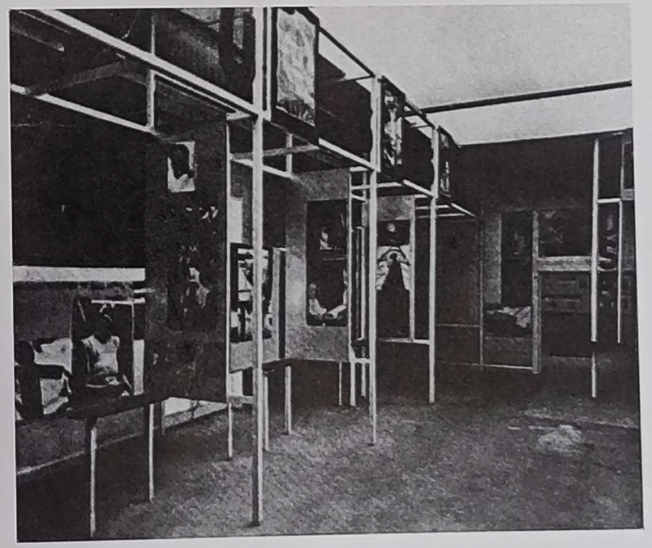
← Room 3 was dedicated to the technique of photomontage. The display included several early examples of this modern medium—such as the catalog for "The First International Dada Fair," which took place in Berlin in 1920—along with other montages by the German artist John Heartfield. Heartfield was a pioneer of modern photomontage, and in the 1920s and 1930s, used his works to powerful political effect, criticizing the Nazi regime. The text above the entry to Room 3 (not pictured) declared, "Use photography as a weapon."

↓ In Room 3 glass vitrines exhibited books that used the photomontage technique. At least three different publishers were represented, including Malik Verlag, an avant-garde German publisher of art books and exhibition catalogs. The bold text on the wall at left quoted Vincent van Gogh: "A feeling for things in themselves is much more important than a sense of the pictorial."



↗ In Room 4, El Lissitzky exhibited Soviet film and photography using a modular frame structure that allowed works to hang at varying heights. Also included were film-viewing machines (center and left) designed by film director Sergei Eisenstein.

→ Room 4 contained works by 30 Russian photographers and documentary images of contemporary Russian life. Also on display were stills from the latest Russian films.



„Film und Foto“

Die internationale Ausstellung des deutschen Werkbunds

Seit Samstag ist in den Städtischen Ausstellungshallen am alten Interimstheaterplatz eine eigenartige, reichhaltige und interessante Schau geöffnet, eine Ausstellung, die unter dem Titel „Film und Foto“ den Versuch macht, die Arbeitsgebiete moderner Photographie systematisch zusammenzustellen, ihren Wirkungsbereich klarzulegen und ihre Entwicklungsmöglichkeiten an der Hand der besten und neuesten Leistungen aufzuzeigen. Ueber die Eröffnung der Ausstellung, die am Pfingstsonntag erfolgte und bis 30. Juni geöffnet sein soll, sind unsere Leser bereits unterrichtet. Mit dieser neuen Ausstellung wollte der Deutsche Werkbund, für den wohl der Worten seines ersten Vorsitzenden alle Gebiete gestaltender Arbeit wichtig sind, nach seiner 1927 veranstalteten Ausstellung „Die Wohnung“ heuer das große, zeitliche Gebiet der Photographie behandeln, das bis jetzt noch nie umfassend und systematisch bearbeitet worden ist.

Die Absicht der Ausstellungsleiter.

An ihrer Spitze der Geschäftsführer der Württ. Arbeitsgemeinschaft des Deutschen Werkbundes, Gustav Stotz, ging vom Prinzip aus, möglichst fabrikmäßiges Arbeiten derjenigen Persönlichkeiten zu bekommen, die als erste die Kamera als zeitgemäßestes Gestaltungsmittel erkannt und mit ihr dementsprechend gearbeitet haben. Diese Ausstellung „Film und Foto“ will keine Ausstellung sogenannter „Künstlerischer Photographie“ sein, sondern geht weit darüber hinaus und beschäftigt sich im erster Linie mit der Photographie als dokumentarischem Darstellungsmittel, als Technik zur Erfassung der Welt mit den Mitteln der photographischen Apparatur. Das sind die leicht bewegliche Kamera mit Objektiv und lichtempfindlicher Platte. Die Ausstellung stellt sich durchaus positiv zu dem reinen Leistungen der Kamera ein.

Der Gliederungsplan der Ausstellung

nennt als Gesamtleiter Gustav Stotz. In der Aufnahmekommission waren tätig Prof. Dr. Hans Hildebrandt-Stuttgart, Professor Bruchard Wanke und Jan Tschichold-München. Den Aufbau besorgte mit großer Umsicht, Sorgfalt und Geschicklichkeit Direktor Ernst Schneidler-Stuttgart. Als Mitarbeiter sind unter Deutschland die Berliner Geschäftsstelle des Deutschen Werkbunds und von Amerika, Holland Rußland und der Schweiz bedeutsame Vertreter genannt. Unter den Ausstellern ist selbstverständlich Deutschland am stärksten vertreten. Besonders auch in der Gruppe „Fotografie und Verbewesen“, die gerade für Württemberg mit seiner hochentwickelten graphischen Industrie von besonderer Bedeutung ist.

Ein Gang durch die Ausstellung.

Die Ausstellung beginnt mit der historischen Abteilung, die Professor Dr. Erich Stenger-Charlottenburg mit äußerst wertvollen und interessantes Aufnahmen aus der Kleinkinderzeit der Photographie bestreitet. Hier sehen wir eine Sammlung von Daguerreotypien, in denen sich der Charakter der Zeit ausspricht. Mit Interesse schaut man sich u. a. auch die Enthüllung des Denkmals Friedrich d. Gr. 1851 und Berlins alte Bogenlampe Straßen an und empfindet bei der photographischen Aufnahme des Einzugs der siegreichen Truppen 1871 in Berlin die Größe der Stunde. Wie anders wirken neben diesen primitiv erscheinenden ersten Photoversuchen die Weltkriegsaufnahmen des Reichsarchivs Potsdam, welche in großer, sorgfältiger Auswahl der Ausstellung zur Verfügung gestellt wurden. In dem ersten Raum der Ausstellung, dessen Material durch Professor Moholy-Nagy-Berlin gesammelt und bearbeitet wurde, wurde der Versuch gemacht, die verschiedenen Arbeitsgebiete der Photographie unter dem Gesichtspunkt der dokumentarischen Erfassung der Welt, unter dem Gesichtspunkt der Filterung der Bewegung und der bewußten Gestaltung mit Licht und Schatten systematisch zu gliedern und gruppenweise zur Darstellung zu bringen. Wir sehen dann auch in diesem Raum u. a. wertvolle und anschauliche Aufnahmen des Landeskriminalpolizeiamts des Bürtt. Polizeipräsidiums, des

Aus der Ausstellung: Film und Foto
Edward Weston, Carmel, Kalifornien. Scharfschütze

Luftschiffbaus Zeppelin in Friedrichshafen und Dr. Nossens in Feuerbach. Wir nennen weiter aus diesem Raum die Ausstellungen der Atlantic-Photo-Berlin, der J. C. Harbenderfer-Berlin, des Kaiser-Wilhelm-Instituts zur Förderung der Wissenschaften, Berlin, der Staatlichen Bildstelle-Berlin, des Techno-Photographischen Archivs-Berlin, der Treptower Sternwarte und des Zoologischen Gartens in Berlin. So sind Zoologie, Botanik, Chemie, Astronomie, kriminelle Photographie, Luftbilder und Materialaufnahmen gleich vollwertig und vollständig vertreten. Unter letzteren verdienen besonders die Fabrikaufnahmen von Dr. Nossen u. Co. in Feuerbach und die Materialaufnahmen von Anna Moldacher Beachtung. Das Interesse des Besuchers der Ausstellung hält so bis zum letzten Raume an, in dem die Union Deutsche Verlagsgesellschaft-Stuttgart interessante Werbedrucksachen, Phototypos und Plakate zeigt.

Auch die Kunstgewerbeschulen sind vertreten. An ihrer Spitze die Graphische Abteilung der Württ. Staatl. Kunstgewerbeschule, die einen Lehrgang Photographie als Ergänzung reklamemäßiger Darstellungsmittel zeigt. Weiter sehen wir Erzeugnisse der Kunstgewerbeschule Halle a. S. und der Kottwangschulen-Essen (Leitung Professor Max Burchartz). Auch die Hochschule für Gestaltung, das Bauhaus-Dessau, ist mit wertvollen Arbeiten vertreten. Von deutsch

Ausstellern seien nur noch einige wenige genannt: Willy Baumeister-Frankfurt, Kenne Biermann-Gera, der Bildungsverband der deutschen Buchdrucker mit wertvollen Plakaten und Werbedrucksachen, R. H. Flachslander-Berlin, Rudolf Kramer-Dresden, Anneliese Kretschmar-Dresden, Geschwister Lessing-Frankfurt, Peterhans-Berlin, Willy Zielke-München. Eine besondere Sehenswürdigkeit der Ausstellung dürften die vier Radiogramme von Dr. Mulder, dem Direktor des Medizinisch-radiologischen Instituts in Bandung (Java) bilden, die bis jetzt noch nirgends gezeigt worden sind.

Vom Ausland

sind neben Kalifornien, Neuyork, London, Paris, Holland, Oesterreich vor allem Belgien und Rußland stark vertreten. Letzterem ist der ganze Raum 4 gewidmet, dessen Material im Auftrag der Gesellschaft für kulturelle Verbindung der Sowjetunion mit dem Ausland von Prof. Lissitzky-Moskau — von der Presse her wohl bekannt — gesammelt und ausgestellt wurde. Die Neugliederung und Anordnung der Aufnahmen erfolgte nach seinen Angaben und Entwürfen. Auch schweizerische Arbeiten fehlen nicht. Zum erstenmal ist damit in Stuttgart ein Material zu sehen, wie es bis jetzt in dieser Vollständigkeit und hoher Qualität noch nirgends zusammengestellt wurde. Wir zweifeln drum nach dem Geschauten nicht, daß diese Ausstellung „Film und Foto“, mit der auch vom 13.—26. Juni

Film-Sonderaufführungen

in den Königsbau-Lichtspielen verbunden sein soll, die Beachtung im In- und Auslande verdienen wird, die ihr nach Anordnung, Zusammenstellung und Material [illegible] verdient.

[34]

← Pages from one of Edward Weston's scrapbooks, containing an undated press clipping on "Film und Foto" from an unknown German publication, c. May 1929. The article reproduces a work by Edward Weston, *Gehäuse Schneider*, that was included in the exhibition. (Translation, p. 235.)

↑ Cover of the catalog for "Film und Foto," Stuttgart, 1929. This copy belonged to the artist Hannah Höch and bears her name handwritten in the top left corner. The catalog consists of essays by the organizers, a checklist of 991 works, and images of works by Edward Weston, El Lissitzky, Alexander Rodchenko, and Max Burchartz. (Selected translations, pp. 226–27.)

↓ Advertisement for "Film usd Foto," published iin *Der rote Stern*, a magazine supplement of the *Süddeutsch Arbeiter-Zeitung*, 18 June1929. Put forth in a nevspaper aimed at leftiist workers, this cal to arms glorifies John Heartfield"s use of photography in the service of class warfare anod toward revolutionary endls.

ARBEITEN VON
AUF DER INTERNATIONALEN WERKBUND-AUSSTELLUNG
John Heartfield
FILM UND FOTO
»WACHT AUF, VERDAMMTE DIESER ERDE!«
FOTO GRAFIK
IN STUTT-GART VOM 18. MAI – 7. JULI
BENÜTZE FOTO ALS WAFFE!
STEHT ALS MOTTO ÜBER DEM EINGANG ZUM RAUM VON JOHN HEARTFIELD

Film und Foto: Internationale Ausstellung des Deutschen Werkbunds [exh. cat.]

"Die Ausstellung"

GUSTAF STOTZ

Stuttgart, 1929

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The development of photographic equipment, the invention of cinematography, and the perfection of technical image reproduction have created a specialized field that is unusually broad and world-encompassing in its range and influence. This development came so surprisingly that oddly enough, up until now, no one anywhere has tried to deal with this area in its entirety, to clarify the domain it affects, or to demonstrate its developmental possibilities through its best and newest accomplishments.

The Stuttgart exhibition, engaged in by the Deutscher Werkbund at my suggestion, ventures this first attempt. It could not involve simply giving a cross-section of photographic production and its working methods, but rather it was important first of all to emphasize what is actually the working scope of photography; that which can be created only through photographic methods that are essential and belong exclusively to it. Consequently, the question of so-called artistic photography moved to the background. Indeed, this exhibition is consciously and intentionally in sharp opposition to this increasingly popular concept still customary, as if a photo-artistic effect can be achieved only through softness, blurriness, and, particularly, manually overworked images. On the contrary! The basis of any true photographic accomplishment is constituted by the objective—that small lens, with which all things can be seized with clarity, sharpness, and precision, as well as the highly light-sensitive coating emulsion that makes it possible to capture, in fractions of a second, even the most vigorous movement on film or plate. Thus on the one hand, the possibility of fixing movement and the sharpest true-to-life capturing of objects; on the other, also the great manipulability of the camera—these are the prominent technical means of the photographic apparatus, means that cannot be achieved by the hand of man. It is from here that the powerful development of photography can be grasped, that its technical and artistic possibilities are delineated.

The exhibition's intention had to do from the start with obtaining, as completely as possible, works by the personalities who were the first to recognize photography as our most up-to-date means of production, and worked with it accordingly. Beyond that, it was important for the exhibition to demonstrate the new working spheres of photography through the display of individual works, which are especially characteristic images. But for all works, the point of view was decisive: the equipment alone does not do it. What is essential is the human being, who stands behind the camera and works with it. With that, the fundamental perspective that served as the basis for the Stuttgart exhibition has been elucidated.

It is obvious that an exhibition that stretches over such an extensive subject and over so many countries cannot be handled by individuals alone. The assistance of numerous personalities was necessary, the most important of whom are named in various other places in the catalog. To these and the many others who have worked so selflessly and with such enthusiasm in the collection and processing of this rich material, I owe my gratitude. Our collective hard work would be splendidly rewarded by seeing the exhibition have a strong and lively impact.

"America and Photography"

EDWARD WESTON

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Photography in America is in a sadly anemic condition,—only a few strong figures outstanding. Generally speaking, the stage has been held by dextrous technicians who depart as far as possible from photographic quality: or on the other hand by those who think photography an easy way to release and expose their excess personal emotions or aspirations. They could not do so with such an honest, direct, uncompromising medium without resorting to tricks,—diffusion of focus, manipulation of prints, or worse, recording of calculated expressions and postures.

Hundreds of tired businessmen or tradesmen, and idle women, play with photography as a holiday hobby,—then offer their results as "art!"

Opposing this facile approach is a photography free from technical tricks and incoherent emotionalism. The finished print is previsioned on the ground glass while focussing, the final result felt at that moment,—in all its values and related forms: the shutter's release fixes forever these values and forms,—developing printing becomes only a careful carrying on of the original idea.

Those who feel nothing, or not completely at the *time of exposure*, relying upon subsequent manipulation to reach an unpremeditated end, are predestined to failure.

Nothing can be transmitted to another, unless an original problem has been felt, conceived and solved: not a trivial problem of clever decoration or the personal ego, but the recording of the very quintessence and interdependence of all life.

Vincent van Gogh wrote: "A feeling for things in themselves is much more important than a sense of the pictorial."

Photographers take note!

With a medium capable of revealing more than the eye sees, "things in themselves" could be recorded, clearly, powerfully: but instead these "pictorial" photographers resort to impressionistic blur.

Impressionism is skepticism; it puts what one casually notices above what one positively knows.

Not to interpret in terms of personal fancy, transitory and superficial moods, but present with utmost exactness,—this is the way in photography,—and it is not an easy way. Vision, sensitive reaction, the knowing of life, all are requisite in those who would direct through the lens forms from out of nature,—maybe only a fragment, but indicating or symbolizing life rhythms.

I have written of photography as "direct, honest, uncompromising"—and so it is when used in its purity, if the worker himself is equally sincere and understanding in selection and presentation. Then it has a power and vitality which moves and holds the spectator. There can be no lie in such photography. No human hand of possible frailty has in the recording lessened its pristine beauty, nor misrepresented its meaning, destroying significance.

A once well known photographer stated as an argument for controlled or manipulated prints that photography needed the vitalizing influence of the hand. Then why photograph at all! The artist of brush and palette has a trained hand with which to better execute and express all things in a better way. Photography has, as already indicated, intrinsic value and use, apart from any other medium.

I have allowed the word "art" to enter in? In this day of ever changing values it is immaterial whether or not photography can be labelled art. It is of our day,—we understand, respond to and need photography as a vital contemporary expression.

But for the sake of argument,—the difference between good and bad art in any medium or of any age lies in the creative mind rather than in skill of hands. The way of seeing is what counts and that is conditioned by the artist's attitude, not by his skill as craftsman. Given a big enough artist and he will make of himself a consummate craftsman to better express his thoughts.

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Originally published as "Amerika und Fotografie." This translation is from the expanded English manuscript, Center for Creative Photography, University of Arizona. From Peter C. Bunnell, ed., Edward Weston on Photography (Salt Lake City, Utah: Peregrine Smith Books, 1983), 55–56.

"Russenfilm und Ausland"

OLGA DAVIDOVNA KAMENEVA

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Cinema is unusually significant to the cultural development of the Soviet Union. Our theaters are not only places of enjoyment; the goals of our cinema go far beyond pure aesthetic impact and beyond the filming of fables offering diversion. In our gigantic country, whose individual republics exceed the size of several European countries, a country with a scanty concentration of railroad lines, many regions are cut off from the cultural metropolises. Accordingly, cinema, due to its strong effect on the viewer, is one of the most important factors in the cultural development and education of the masses in both the city and the country. As a result, we are forced to be particularly serious in our approach to all the essential issues surrounding film, to try to align them with the general tasks of cultural development and find a solution to the cultural revolution in our country.

The high artistic value of our cinematography is generally recognized. A series of Soviet films would not only be seen as significant in the Soviet Union itself, but also abroad, where they would be evaluated as critical for the further development of films worldwide. We are glad about this success, which confirms the correctness of our working methods in this area. However, we do not simply want to rest on our laurels. Our directors and cinema workers are continually perfecting their work, and self-criticism helps them determine their mistakes and find new directions in their work. Therefore, each experiment with this

film und foto
wir erlauben uns, sie zur eröffnung der wanderausstellung des deutschen werkbundes auf mittwoch 28. august 1929, abends 8 uhr höflichst einzuladen.
direktion des kunstgewerbemuseums der stadt zürich

↖↖ Invitation to the opening of "Film und Foto," Kunstgewerbemuseum, Zurich, 28 August 1929.

↖ Installation view, Zurich, August–September 1929. Photographs depicting various sporting activities were installed on a wall adjacent to a gallery that contained images representing the "Scope of Modern Photography," as indicated by the text above the doorway.

← Installation view, Zurich, 1929.

↗ Graphic design installation, Zurich, 1929.

→ Installation view, Russian section, Zurich, 1929.

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↑ Installation view of "Film und Foto," Martin-Gropius-Bau, Berlin, October–November 1929. Works by László Moholy-Nagy were installed on the wall at right.

↓ Installation view, Russian section, Berlin, 1929.

work is important, and our cinema exhibitions abroad are a reflection of this experimentation, namely in countries with a highly developed technology.

Our leading film professionals realize that they have the Revolution to thank for what is seen abroad as distinction and originality in Soviet film.

The artistic and spiritual richness of Soviet films is explainable as a result of being built on the material of revolutionary reality, originating from the chronicling—or fixing—of facts and events. Revolutionary events and facts determine the significance of our filmic character, not only lending artistic power to the formulation of new revolutionary themes, but also crystallizing new fundamental ideas that will be of considerable importance for filmic art. Connecting our originality to the advanced cinematic technologies of Western Europe, as well as creating an awareness of our working methods there, are equally important to both parties. Therefore we maintain that a connection between our country and the foreign film scene will make for a rich future. This connection will be all the easier to produce, since at precisely this moment, a powerful movement is forming abroad with the aim of freeing film from all commercial ulterior motives, allowing for an exclusive focus on work that is creative, artistic, and cultural. The "Congress for Free Cinema" is indicative of the scale and strength of this movement. Called into being in September of this year, it encompasses innumerable delegations from many countries, among them also the Soviet Union as well as representatives of progressive cinema organizations and groups. The significance of such an international organization for the further development of European film is extraordinarily major. The organization of this congress will awaken the activity of all those for whom the destiny of cinema is close to their hearts, and attempt to take cinema far beyond the point of its demise and subjugate it to the interests of art. Soviet cinematography will, of course, actively take part in this work.

We think that not only a two-way conversation, but a close collaboration between our cinema and foreign cinema is important. Work that involves both directors and actors from our country and Germany have already proven to be successful.

The film version of the *Living Corpse* need only be recalled here.

Exhibitions play a large role in the further strengthening of this connection. We are proportionately late in entering international life within the area of art film. The present exhibition, following the cinema exhibition in The Hague the previous year, is only the second to take place. The Society for Cultural Alliance with Foreign Countries of the Soviet Union received the invitation from the Deutscher Werkbund to participate in this exhibition with special satisfaction. In contrast to previous exhibitions, this show is exclusively "progressive" in its orientation: our new and experimental cinematography, which those in foreign countries view enthusiastically, will be demonstrated.

The Stuttgart exhibition reflects a stage in the development of cultural work within the domain of cinema. The Society for Cultural Alliance with Foreign Countries of the Soviet Union created, in order to produce this work methodically, a special Cinema Department, whose work examines all artistic, scientific, and cultural spheres of Soviet cinematography. The department's principal goal is to acquaint foreign countries with the achievements of Soviet cinematography, and to initiate a mutual exchange of theoretical and practical experience.

In the short time since its inception, this Cinema Department has already accomplished much. With the Cinema Department's assistance, we showed a film, made available by the Japanese Society of Friends of the Soviet Union, depicting for our viewers the Japanese people's way of life and their culture. One of our films, which was shot in Mongolia and has now been shown in Western Europe, gave the Western European public not only the possibility of becoming acquainted with a significant work of our cinematography, but also via its mediation becoming familiar with Mongolia. The showing of a film about the Pamir expedition on the occasion of this exhibition makes in turn a substantial contribution to familiarity with our cultural collaboration with Germany within a scientific domain.

The work of the Cinema Department of the Society for Cultural Alliance with Foreign Countries of the Soviet Union will bring all the more fruit, all the more—and more intensively—the connection is formed with the public cinema organizations of foreign countries, and the more such organizations are created in other countries where they do not exist.

While now our Soviet cinema public can only judge Western European cinema by means of its films that have made their way via the marketing system, we hope that in the future this familiarity would take place following a specific plan, which would be worked out together with our foreign friends. This would give our public the possibility of penetrating into the essence of various foreign film tendencies as well as becoming familiar with the cultural and scientific achievements of European and American cinematography.

"Zur Werkbundausstellung 'Film und Foto' in Stuttgart"

FRIEDRICH MATTHIES-MASUREN
Photographische Chronik — Berlin,
11 June 1929

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The Werkbund exhibition "Film und Foto," organized and opened in an exemplary fashion, concerns the most diverse aspects of photography; only those that have interested amateurs and professional photographers for several decades are downplayed or omitted. "Film and Foto" sets itself—like "The Photography of the Present" . . . and the previous year's traveling exhibition "New Directions in Photography"—in sharp opposition to the preconception that an artistic effect is achieved through softness, printing techniques, and manual retouching. It propagates the unfalsified photographic document.

Here is an excerpt from the exhibition's guiding principles, which are written on special panels in the first room: "Daguerre could not retouch nor make copies. His photographs possess a strong documentary urgency. With Talbot's paper negatives, the grain of the paper surely makes itself felt, and this is the root of painterly photography. Because they also have a painterly sensibility, the creative intensity of Hill's photographic portraits may be mistaken for a traditional painterly aesthetic. In reality, their appearance stems from the insufficiencies of the photographic process."

The almost polemical character of these formulations is a bit irritating because it seems unnecessary and, furthermore, because they give the impression that documentary photography has remained completely unnoticed up until this most present contribution. It is almost unnecessary to mention here that in photography circles, many argue against the manual reworking, blurriness,

and unclean tones produced by falsely understood printing techniques, and that this interpretation is continually gaining ground.

Pure, documentary photography is not a time-bound discovery, as it has always existed alongside the "artistic" and always likewise had validity.

The conception that painterly effects in photography are based on the grain of the paper, as in Hill's portraits, is also a long-standing perception. It was primarily painters who occupied themselves with photography during the first years. They made every effort to influence the mechanical process, and it is from them that the connection with and imitation of the visual arts derives. In fact, temporarily, Hill saw in photography a device for assisting with his group paintings. It was for him only a means to an end. His photographic portraits had no effect on the development of photography. For almost sixty years, practically no one paid attention to his photographs, and it is only recently that they have become known and valued. But it is indisputable that his works are precise reflections of their time and materials. The "painterly" effect that arose from the grain of the paper is of less significance; what is important is that these portraits were altogether novel and in no way derived from the painting of the time. Taken outside in full sunlight, they are still surprisingly lively and expressive, ninety years later. Hill himself did not think a lot of them, and hardly intended to produce "painterly photography." That may be irrelevant; what must be established is Hill's lack of influence on artistic photography. The photos by this Scott are artifacts of individual photographic pursuit and in their form have at least as much deliberate creative power and inventive intensity as the strongest modern images.

In the oft-repeated reference in this exhibition to work that is "unprecedented in its true-to-nature materials" the translation of color into monochrome plays a crucial role, and this effect could have been touched upon more often. Today, the use of a filter in conjunction with a color-sensitive layer allows for fidelity to nature and representation of materiality.

But technical questions are not fodder for discussion in this exhibition. Rather, the focus is on what an artistic person can achieve through photography. And this is surprisingly successful.

The manual camera, rapid lens, sensitive layer, and high-wattage lamps are the elementary means through which these contemporary photographers produce "pure documents of temporal reality." The achievement of these photographers lies in their appreciation of the essential, their rapid fixing, their precise excerpt, their clear contrast, and their sharpness. They should not be evaluated according to a photographic aesthetic, but rather as "the human intensity of optically captured experience."

But it is not my aim to evaluate this achievement. I will not even permit myself a provisory sorting out. It may be an overvalued, false path, but focusing on the impression of the whole exhibition does not impair the detail. This "photography of the present" dominates public opinion, and that should not be overlooked. One must involve oneself with its development. And new ideas and fresh impulses are urgently needed for the continued stimulation of the medium.

Undoubtedly, the danger exists that, as a result of the exhibition's success, an "outbreak of photographic activity" will arise in the near future. Yes, in fact, it is already here, for it is not difficult to photograph architectural details, peopled streets and squares, parts of plants, glasses and bottles, gramophones and typewriters, and any other kinds of objects by following the given instructions. They can be shot from below or above, with or without lighting effects, from new viewpoints or from distortions. It is certainly less difficult than in the past to find pictorial excerpts from nature and to work them up into usable prints. It is impossible to curb this trend at a time of such dominance. However, the gift for investigation is just as rare as for talent and invention.

The significance of photography for "science and technology" is a long-established conclusion. The exhibition presents valuable proof of this, but does not necessarily offer up material that differs from previous exhibitions. In this group belongs the exemplary shots of the Württemburg Police Department, which are sharp, naturalistic, and free of retouching. They are here only a means to an end, and an indication of the extraordinary significance of photography for this domain as well. They may not be anything other than obligatory, and by no means claim to contribute to "the upbringing of a photographic culture," as asserted by the exhibition wall texts.

Very valuable and innovative is the assemblage of photographs in the "Intelligence and Propaganda" section. Surely the origin of modern reportage lies in these momentary shots. Such photographs have become indispensable for the present time. In fact, does there exist an illustrated newspaper that is not made up of such shots?

Under the heading "Photography as Means of Propaganda," the exhibition highlights numerous direct shots as they are used in conjunction with writing and drawing in advertisements, posters, and prospectuses. One finds that the most effective shots are those of jewelry, fabrics, ceramics, matches, fountain-pen holders, and other objects, which could easily come to replace the current drawn and painted versions. And it is here that the montage of various shots has garnered new unity, sense, and the right to exist.

The significant contribution the exhibition makes to "the culture of film"—on which they should prepare a research workshop on the structure, content, and formal nature of films—will be discussed later, on the occasion of the planned presentations in Stuttgart.

"De Fifo te Stuttgart" [excerpt]

PIET ZWART

Het Vaderland — Antwerp, 9 July 1929

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. . . For much of the time we do not realise the role that photography plays in the social, technical and creative life of our times; we are not aware that it shapes our understanding and view of the relationship between one person and another and between people and the experienceable world, we do not grasp or realise its value in the development of technology and science, nor do we plumb its significance as a visual medium for a new form of artistic expression. But those who were aware of these facts, recognized the importance of bringing together these photographic manifestations in an exhibition. It is to the great credit of Gustaf Stotz, representative of the Württemberg department of the Deutsche Werkbund, that he grasped the necessity of tackling this undertaking in a way that would transform our common indifference or ignorance of the facts into understanding and a conscious awareness. Those who saw the exhibition will have been able to form an accurate picture of the position that photography occupies in our daily life. This is not a collection of those sickly sweet, pretty pictures so prevalent in most photographic exhibitions, the more or less technically competent reflections on the vanity of people who have their portraits taken, or the snapshots of picturesque alleyways and ditches, or the attempts at a painterly approach to romantic effects dressed up as 'art'—all of which are expressions of a poor or one-sided understanding of the photographic practice, which in fact render these exhibitions of negligible value. Instead the Fifo offers a succinct historical overview which serves to reflect the development of photography as an independent means of expression; it focuses particularly on its importance in daily and public life; the photograph in the service of criminology, scientific research, reportage and advertising; the photograph in terms of its documentary significance and as a new element in our optical consciousness; the photograph as a new form of pictorial expression; an international cross-section of the billions of living phenomena by means of light-etching.

. . . It is no longer a question of whether photography can be classed as art. But as long as people continue to ask this question with the idea of judging this new pictorial medium according to the manifestations of other forms of expression—drawing or painting for example; as long as people seek to make photography compete with the pictorial potential inherent in painting, then the question will continue to be posited in the wrong way and adequately argued.

. . . The sheer material exhibited at the Fifo is overwhelming. The dividing line between what should and what should not be included in the exhibition was 'photographic sharpness'. With terrific aplomb each country submitted the most characteristic examples of their output. There are the French with their sensitive compositions and remarkable pictorial experiments; the Russians with their deeply human, highly emotional, painfully sensitive visions, the Germans with their important scientific and documentary work and their precise eye for the optic values to be found in the things around us and their systematic survey of the expressive possibilities of light-etching, and the Americans with their uncanny total mastery of technique which enables them to achieve an almost frightening textural quality. All this adds up to an exhibition of great retrospective significance.

And the Netherlands?

We only submitted a small contribution: it could not have been otherwise, given the anemic nature of photographic practice in our country. It is typical that, despite the repeated reminders placed in the press about the preparation for this exhibition by the compiler of the Dutch contribution, not one professional photographer came forward, with the result that the compiler had to fall back on avant-gardists he himself knew. Nevertheless we put up quite a good show: we do not stand out for the brilliance of our technique—Berssenbrugge's submissions, which we had judged to be wonders of technical perfection, appear almost bungling in comparison with the extraordinary technical finish of the Americans and of several of the Germans (Peterhans!), whose pictorial power he lacks; a few other Dutch contributors, however, display a compositional power which gives them a distinctive character amongst the many entries, the same compositional power which gave birth to several of our modern architectural manifestations (Kamman). But more important still, a few of them have understood the activist power of the photograph and applied it to advertising; in particular the dynamic compositions of Van Berkel's Patent and design sketches of Paul Schuitema rank among the best practical applications of photography on display at the Fifo. The publicity material produced by Piet Zwart for the Dutch cable company (NKF) in Delft was commended by the German and French press.

But all this is not enough! If we could only learn to value photography as a pictorial medium which possibly holds an even greater potential than painting, then there is no reason why we should not attain similar heights with the lens and light-sensitive material.

For that, however, we will have to conquer our half-hearted attitude to this new visual medium. It is therefore desirable that this exhibition, which has once again focused the attention of many people on Stuttgart and will in turn travel to other cities in Germany and elsewhere abroad in a smaller version, should also be seen in our country . . .

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From Flip Bool and C. Broos, ed., Piet Zwart (1885–1977) (Amsterdam: Focus Publishing, 1996), 13–14. Translation by Karen Gamester and Nicoline Gatehouse.

"Werkbund-Ausstellung 'Film und Foto,' Stuttgart 1929" [excerpt]

KARL WEISS

Die Photographische Industrie — Berlin, 28 August 1929

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Architect Gustaf Stotz, director of the Württemberg Alliance of the German Werkbund, provided the initiative for this most modern of exhibitions, and was the first to attempt to combine international pictorial material in this show. To give it away from the start, the attempt has succeeded, and the results greatly exceed what was achieved recently in other quarters by the Folkwang Museum in Essen. The thoughts and considerations with which Stotz assembled his exhibition can best be expressed in his own words! It could not involve simply giving a cross-section of photographic production and its working methods, but rather it was important first of all to emphasize what is actually the working scope of photography: that which can be created only through photographic methods that are essential and belong exclusively to it. . . . Thus, on one hand, the possibility of fixing movement and the sharpest true-to-life capturing of objects; on the other, also the great manipulability of the camera—these are the prominent technical means of the photographic apparatus, means that cannot be achieved by the hand of man. It is from here that the powerful development of photography can be grasped, that its technical and artistic possibilities are delineated.

In this fashion, Stotz attempts to fill in any possible gaps and to unify the works of all the personalities in his exhibition—those who were the first to have recognized the camera as the creative means most appropriate to our time.

The first large-scale space, organized by Moholy-Nagy, constitutes an overview of the exhibition, which includes experiments in the most diverse photographic domains. Moholy has coined a new way to captivate the viewer and to highlight the appropriate exhibited object, to compel viewers to consider small individual images: he has placed large blow-ups of particularly telling examples on pillars that project from the walls, and immediately beneath or beside these large pictures the actual images included in the exhibition. In this room the series begins with a carefully selected historical sampling, which Dr. Erich Stenger of Berlin has made available from his

large collection. In comparison with these old creations made on metal or glass plates from the first half of the last century, one can respond with astonishment, but also with satisfaction, that the new objectivity with which the exhibition "Film und Foto" speaks corresponds with the earliest photographic results. The unaffected, razor-sharp picture returns—before as a result of primitive technology—that did not allow for reworking or "improvement," and today newly generated in the notion that photography alone permits undiminished expressive possibilities to be fully realized. Things have come full circle; photography has returned to its earliest form, deriving its sense from the fact that for the daguerreotype's first audience, what seemed most noticeable and admirable was that the optical image—in its sharpness and absoluteness—was captured by a truth-to-nature not attainable with the hand. Granted, the pictures from then and now are different—but no more different than the people represented from different times, and no more different than what is enabled by improved shooting and copying technology. Experiments regarding numerous photographic possibilities followed at this stage. In large wall texts, Moholy-Nagy provides a foreword: "In this space, the most essential stages from photographic history are shown. The primary emphasis is the representation of photographic elements. Command of them can lead to a synthetic photographic contribution. These elements are essentially:

> The possibilities of creating unadulterated documents:
>
> statically standing, kinetically flexible in varying light intensities,
>
> new sights, enlargements, microscopic shots, X-ray pictures, mechanical consumption of reality, direct light designs (photograms), penetrations, simultaneous projection, whose preceding stages are photomontage."

In this room factual shots and photo reportage take over a large space—also portrayals of animals, images of plants, micro-shots, X-ray film, and pictures from the world war. The following spaces are devoted to individuals, including extensive photographic series by Sasha Stone, Moholy-Nagy, Otto Umbehr, Renger-Patzsch, Peterhans, Dr. Lossen, Germaine Krull, Gutschow, Finsler, Tschichold—to name only a few. All of them have their own ways of working, interpretations of that which is seen, in a pictorial rendering which in most cases allows the person who has made it to be recognized. That is the beauty of this exhibition—that pictures from the progressive, the trailblazing innovators are shown, not pictures that emulate what has already frequently been seen. And so this exhibition has at least one valuable use for visitors who are interested in photography: it opens the eyes, shows things in their whole actual and photographable beauty, which we have until now passed without noticing—everyday things with innumerable pictorial possibilities. And this usefulness belongs to each person interested in this exhibition—whether true to romantic photography with all its manual artistic improvements, or whether he wants to see with wide-open eyes the things around him as they really are.

In coming weeks, the illustrated photo newspapers will provide us with numerous sample images from this exhibition, just as the exhibition catalog also contains numerous picture-plates. It is more valuable to visit the exhibition itself, and to participate directly in the stimulation; hopefully this will also shortly be possible in Berlin.

The filmic part of the exhibition will be presented through lectures and the showing of prominent older and newer films.

"Exhibition in Stuttgart, June 1929, and Its Effects" [excerpt]

ANDOR KRASZNA-KRAUSZ

Close-Up — London, 19 December 1929

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... Though not a film-exhibition par excellence, but in the first respect a very intensive collection of modern photography (and in connection with it the regular performance of the work done till now by those young and detached ones, who call themselves within and beyond the frontier the Avant-garde), the spectator was won by the sympathetic endeavours of *Herrn Gustav Stotz*, commercial leader of the *Württembergische Arbeitgemeinschaft des Deutschen Werkbundes* to whom the whole thanked its existence.

Not only because of its importance the photographic exhibition must be remembered, but also, and principally because of the valuable recognitions by which the Stuttgart photographs led to conclusions for films.

From Germany, England, France, Holland, Austria, Russia, Switzerland, Czechoslovakia, and the United States one saw the collected work of those who assert themselves to belong to photographic production that is consciously modern. Before one reached the pictures grouped after their original countries and personalities, one went through a room created by *Prof. L. Moholy-Nagy* that represented the development since Daguerre and the spheres of scientific, reporting and advertising photography, in large, distinct lines; the final conclusion of the whole is that the task of photography of today is to devote its specific technical means to that active service of the present time, by immediate, unembellished catching of true impressions of life. ...

... I look into the pages of the programme of both the Stuttgart cinemas that showed the selection of the film exhibition from the 13th to the 24th of June. What about the immortality there?

But let us leave this difficult world aside and be content with the search for durability. One will surely not find the most permanent works of the film done till to-day, as their collection on one spot for a certain time still must meet the most complicated and ridiculous difficulties of the film business. But still we find some titles announced in the list, which can be considered as fitting without any discussion. At first I am going to speak only about play-films already known from regular performances. As follows:—*Das Cabinet des Dr. Caligari* by *Robert Weine*; *Variété* by *E. A. Dupont*; *Geheimnisse einer Seele* by *G. W. Pabst*; *Dirnentragödie* with *Asta Neilsen*—of German origin. *Johanna von Orléans* by *C. Dreyer*—of French origin. *Zehn Tage, die die Welt erschütterten*, by *S. M. Eisenstein*; *Die letzten Tage von St. Petersburg* by *W. Pudovkin*; *Arsenal* by *Dovjenko*—of Russian origin. *Zirkus* by *Chaplin*; *Chicago* by *Frank Urson*—of American origin.

From a collaboration so to speak between industrial organization and modern artists arose the following pictures, some of which can be called documentary films: *The KiphoWerberfilm* and the *Kreuzworträtselfilm* by *Guido Seeber*; *Prinz Achmed* by *Lotte Reiniger*; *Die Symphonie einer Grosstadt* by *Walter Ruttmann*; *Inflation* and introduction to *Ariadne* by *Hans Richter*; *Kreislauf des Wassers* by *Robert Blum*; *Die Wunder der Kamera* by *Dr. Edgar Beyfuss*; *Kuddelmuddel* by *Alex Strasser*—of German origin. *Leben in Wassertropfen*, *Würmer und Seerosen*, by *Mol*—of Dutch origin. *Der Florentiner Hut* by *René Clair* and *L'Isle de Paris* by *Lacombe*—of French origin. *Lenins Warheit*, *Das elfte Jahr*, *Der sechste Teil der Welt*, *Kinoauge*, *Der Mann mit dem Kinoapparat*, by *Dziga Vertoff*; and *Pamir* of Russian origin.

Avant-garde films in the strict sense of the word *Diagonal Symphonie* by *Viking Eggeling*; *Opus 2–4* by *Walter Ruttmann*—of German origin. *Die Brücke*, *Regen*, *Brandung* by *Joris Ivens*—Dutch origin. *Variationen der Ungeduld* by *Dekeukelaire*—of Belgian origin. *Entr'acte* by *René Clair*, *Emak Bakia*, *Étoile de Mer* by *Man Ray*, *Die Muschel* by *Germaine Dulac*, *Lichter und Schnelligkeiten* by *Beaumont*, *La Marche des Machines* by *Eugène Deslav*—of French origin. *Leo Tolstoi*, *Aufstieg*, by *Esther Schub*—of Russian origin.

It would take too much space, should I try to speak about all of these films single and detailed. The first mentioned biggest films are presumably generally well known. And the non-German work of the smaller ones is not unknown to the readers of this paper.

The Russian Work of a more recent date will probably make an exception. Such as the monographic pictures cut from old weekly shows by *Esther Schub*, which leave an interesting impression of their object but only a grey one of their quality as a film. *Vertoff's* art of reporting, willful and based only upon the rhythm of cutting would deserve a special analysis sometime. It is *Dovjenko*, who seems to be the most original and at the same time the most valuable, he transfers Russian naturalism from a symbolic play into power restrained by quietness. It will be possible to come to a conclusion only after all his work stands before us as a whole; Stuttgart only showed cuttings.

Some words still about the German Films shown. Already the director of the first of them, *Viking Eggeling*, was originally a Norwegian painter, who only lived in Germany and made its *Diagonalsymphonie* there. It represents the first attempt at a radical abstract picture. In the way of ornaments of diagonal lines changing in the movement; a play, whose charm is perceivable only in single moments, and that does not touch us otherwise. Quite different the abstract films of Walter Ruttman, that seem even now in a distance of eight years to be the strongest products of their kind. Possibly because the abstraction of those pushing, flashing and sliding geometrical bodies is no more abstraction for it reveals distinct associations with contents. As a third *Hans Richter* coming too from a painter's circles whose optical picture-combinations and distortions were allowed to serve as introductions and intermezzis for industrial playfilms. In contrast to him—who searched for an eventual expression of technical means, without being able to rule out of them his antecedent—*Guido Seeber* has found shrewd variations for advertising films rising from technics which he playfully commands. *Robert Blum* cuts strange landscape-pictures to a unit of comprehension. *Alex Strasser* finds talented ideas in feuilletonistic contemplation of everyday life for the weekly show. And *Dr. Beyfuss* chooses examples for different kinds of camerawork out of foreign documentary films and weekly shows.

The most striking thing for the contemplator of these films is the fact that they incline towards industrial manufacture in the course of time in an increasing scale. While in America a too vehement film industry suppresses a too weak Avantgarde and in France a too vehement Avantgarde overpowers a too weak industry; in Germany—and it is similar in Russia—a mid-heavy industry seems to mix with a mid-heavy Avantgarde. Here one often likes to grumble about the commercialized production of the German film, which hinders the rising of new ideas and new men; and yet—if we look upon it from the perspective of to-day—it must appear that just in the most brilliant period of film—Germany (between 1921 and 1925) the experimenters, who in other countries had to deal with small and smallish work here found rich opportunity to transfer their revolutionary ambitions into works of the greatest style. I not only think of the above-mentioned pictures, *Caligari*, *Variété*, *Geheimnisse einer Seele*, but also of formerly popular films by *Lubitsch*, *Lang*, *Pick* and *Murnau*.

The German Avantgarde of these times has also found new contents for new technics, while the French had been forced to discover new technics, without their contents ever turning up. The French waited for tasks that never came. They practised for a work which they have expected in vain. They have made reclamations already in every sphere; they searched in all the streets and cul-de-sacs without finding ways, and before all without seeing an aim. They played—sometimes carried by enchanted moods—the most difficult studies. And somebody just passing by in the street also sometime or other caught an ingenious accord, surrounded it by a couplet and became rich. The neighbourhood, the environment, the audience however, got nervous, grumbled and shut its windows, for one could not listen to studies and scales for a long time, even if a Paganini played them. And a Paganini of film does not even exist; and film itself is by no means a violin. ...

"'Film und Foto': Die Internationale Ausstellung des Deutschen Werkbunds"

R.A.

Unknown publication — Stuttgart, c. May 1929

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Since Saturday an original, extensive and interesting exhibition has been on view at the City Exhibition Hall on the old Interim Theater Square. Entitled "Film und Foto," it attempts a systematic assembly of material representing the various fields of modern photography, delineating its range of applications and making clear its capacity for further development through a display encompassing the best and latest achievements. Our readers have already been informed of the opening of the exhibition, which took place on Whit Saturday. It will remain open through 30th June. As affirmed by its first President, the Deutscher Werkbund acknowledges the importance of all aspects of design. Following its exhibition of 1927, "The Dwelling," it has now sought to examine the great contemporary subject of photography, which has not in the past been so comprehensively and systematically treated.

THE AIM OF THE EXHIBITION'S ORGANIZERS,

under the leadership of Gustaf Stotz, Managing Director of the Württemberg working group of the Deutscher Werkbund, was from the start to acquire for the exhibit a representation as complete as possible of the work of those photographers who have pioneered the camera as the creative tool most appropriate to modern life, and have used it in that spirit in their own work. The exhibition "Film und Foto" is not intended as a display of so-called artistic photography. Rather, it goes far beyond that category, being primarily concerned with photography as documentation, as a technique for comprehending the world through the use of photographic equipment. In our day this means the easily portable camera, the lens and the light-sensitive plate. The exhibition adopts a consistently positive view of every sort

of image that can be produced through purely photographic means.

THE SPATIAL AND CONCEPTUAL ARRANGEMENT OF THE EXHIBITION

has been the responsibility of its Chief Curator, Gustaf Stotz. Also closely involved, through their membership of the selection committee, were Prof. Dr. Hans Hildebrandt (Stuttgart), Professor Leonhard Pamkok (Munich) and Jan Tschihold (Munich). The successful realization of their scheme is owed to the circumspection, meticulous attention and dexterity of Professor Ernst Schneidler (Stuttgart). Notable among collaborators from elsewhere in Germany have been members of the Berlin working group of the Deutscher Werkbund, while those from abroad include important representatives from America, Hollard, Russia and Switzerland. Among exhibitors, Germany is of course the country best represented. This is especially so in the case of the section "Photography and Advertising," which is of particular importance for Württemberg with its highly developed printing industry.

A STROLL THROUGH THE EXHIBITION.

The display opens with a historical section, for which Professor Dr. Erich Stenger (Charlottenburg) has assembled some exceptionally valuable and interesting photographs from the infancy of the medium. Here, we find a collection of daguerreotypes especially evocative of the spirit of their time. Visitors will doubtless be fascinated to see, for example, the unveiling, in 1851, of the Berlin monument to Frederick the Great, and that city's Leipzigerstrasse as it once was, and will be able to sense the glory of the moment, in 1871, when the German army made its triumphal entry into Berlin. What a difference there is between these seemingly primitive first essays in photography and the large group of photographs taken during the Great War, lent by the Reichsarchiv in Potsdam, and very carefully selected for this exhibition. In the first room of the sequence, with material selected and arranged by Professor Moholy-Nagy (Berlin), an attempt has been made to organize the exhibits according to a systematic subdivision and grouping of material in relation to the diverse fundamental approaches adopted by the photographers in question: be it the documentary comprehension of the world, the record of movement, or the conscious exploitation of light and shadow in the creation of a photographic image. Also to be seen in this room, among other exhibits, are photographs that are especially valuable on account of their detail and clarity: these have been loaned by the Regional Police Headquarters of the Württemberg Chief of Police, the Zeppelin airship company in Friedrichshafen, and Dr. Loffen im Feuerbach. Also of note in this room are the displays by Atlantic Photo (Berlin), the I. G. Farben factory (Berlin), the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute for the Promotion of the Sciences (Berlin), the State Photographic Archive (Berlin), the Technical-Photographic Archive (Berlin), the Observatory in Berlin-Treptow, and the Zoological Gardens in Berlin. By this means, zoology, botany, chemistry, astronomy, forensic photography, aerial photography, and the photographic record of objects are compellingly and comprehensively represented in the exhibition. In connection with the two last-named categories, we would draw particular attention to the photographic record of factories made by Dr. Loffen & Co. in Feuerbach, and the photographic record of objects made by Anne Mosbacher. The interest of the visitor will in this way be maintained throughout the exhibition, which closes with a room in which the United German Publishers' Society (Stuttgart) displays interesting material relating to printed advertising, phototypography and posters.

The exhibition also covers the achievements of the applied arts schools. Best represented here is the graphics department of the Württemberg Staatliche Kunstgewerbeschule, with the work of students taking its course in the use of photography in advertising. We also see here work produced by students attending the Kunstgewerbeschule in Halle an der Saale and the Volkswangschule (Essen), where Professor Max Burchartz is now the director. Also very well represented here is the Hochschule für Gestaltung, or Bauhaus (Dessau). Of individual German exhibitors we shall here mention only a few: Willi Baumeister (Frankfurt), Aenne Biermann (Gera), members of the Educational Association of German Book Printers, who display valuable posters and advertising material, F. A. Flachsländer (Berlin), Rudolf Kramer (Dresden), Anneliese Kretschmer (Dresden), the Leistikow sisters (Frankfurt), Peterhans (Berlin) and Willy Zielke (Munich). A particular attraction of the exhibition will be the four radiograms made by Dr. Maldler, Director of the Medical-Radiological Institute in Bandang (Java), here publicly exhibited for the first time.

FROM ABROAD,

in addition to California, New York, London, Paris, Holland and Austria, both Belgium and Russia are especially well represented in the exhibition. The last of these has been allotted all of Room 4, which shows material especially collected by Professor El Lissitzky (Moscow)—already well known to the German and international press—on behalf of the Soviet Union's Society for International Cultural Relations. The subdivision of this room and the arrangement of the photographs exhibited there are in accordance with Professor Lissitzky's scheme. There is also much work from Switzerland. Here in Stuttgart, therefore, we believe we have achieved a display of photographic material such as was nowhere before assembled so comprehensively and with examples of such high quality. On the evidence of what we have ourselves seen, we have no doubt that the exhibition "Film und Foto," together with the associated

SPECIAL FILM PRESENTATIONS,

taking place between 13th and 26th June at the Königsbau Movie House, will attract the national and international attention truly merited by its contents, arrangement and purpose.

16

Cubism and Abstract Art: Painting, Sculpture, Constructions, Photography, Architecture, Industrial Art, Theatre, Films, Posters, Typography

New York, 1936

LOCATION AND DATES
The Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53rd Street, New York, 3 March–19 April 1936

CURATOR
Alfred H. Barr, Jr.

ITINERARY
San Francisco Museum of Art, San Francisco, 27 July–24 August 1936; Cincinnati Art Museum, Cincinnati, Ohio, 19 October–16 November 1936; Minneapolis Institute of Arts, Minneapolis, Minnesota, 29 November–27 December 1936; Cleveland Museum of Art, Cleveland, Ohio, 7 January–7 February 1937; Baltimore Museum of Art, Baltimore, Maryland, 17 February–17 March 1937; Rhode Island School of Design, Providence, Rhode Island, 24 March–21 April, 1937; Grand Rapids Art Gallery, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 29 April–26 May 1937

ARTISTS
Alexander Archipenko, Hans Arp, Giacomo Balla, Herbert Bayer, Rudolf Belling, Umberto Boccioni, Constantin Brancusi, Georges Braque, Marcel Breuer, Francis Bruguière, Alexander Calder, Carlo Carrà, A. M. Cassandre, Paul Cézanne, Pierre Chareau, Giorgio de Chirico, Robert Delaunay, André Derain, Theo van Doesburg, César Domela-Nieuwenhuis, Marcel Duchamp, Raymond Duchamp-Villon, Cornelis van Eesteren, Viking Eggeling, F. H. Ehmcke, Max Ernst, Alexandra Exter, Lyonel Feininger, Naum Gabo, Irakli Gamrekeli, Alexei Gan, Paul

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Gauguin, Alberto Giacometti, W. H. Gispen, Albert Gleizes, Vincent van Gogh, Natalia Goncharova, Julio González, Juan Gris, Walter Gropius, Josef Hartwig, Jean Hélion, Robert van't Hoff, Y. Humener, Vilmos Huszar, Wassily Kandinsky, E. McKnight Kauffer, Frederick Kiesler, Paul Klee, Gustav Klucis, František Kupka, Roger de La Fresnaye, Mikhail Larionov, Henri Laurens, Vladimir Lebedev, Le Corbusier, Fernand Léger, Leistikow siblings, Willem van Leusden, Wyndham Lewis, Jacques Lipchitz, El Lissitzky, Berthold Lubetkin, Jean Lurçat, Kasimir Malevich, Franz Marc, Louis Marcoussis, André Masson, Henri Matisse, Erich Mendelsohn, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, Joan Miró, László Moholy-Nagy, Piet Mondrian, Henry Moore, Carl Otto Müller, Ben Nicholson, I. Nivinski, H. Nöckur, J. J. P. Oud, Amédée Ozenfant, Antoine Pevsner, Francis Picabia, Pablo Picasso, Giovanni Battista Piranesi, Liubov Popova, Enrico Prampolini, Man Ray, Odilon Redon, Walter Reimann, Hans Richter, Gerrit Rietveld, Alexander Rodchenko, Henri Rousseau, Luigi Russolo, Antonio Sant'Elia, Lothar Schenk von Trapp, Oskar Schlemmer, Joost Schmidt, Kurt Schwitters, Sergei Senkin, Georges Seurat, Gino Severini, Georgi Stenberg, Vladimir Stenberg, Varvara Stepanova, David Sterenberg, Yves Tanguy, Vladimir Tatlin, Jan Tschichold, Georges Vantongerloo, Jacques Villon, Georgiy Yakulov

EXHIBITION CATALOG

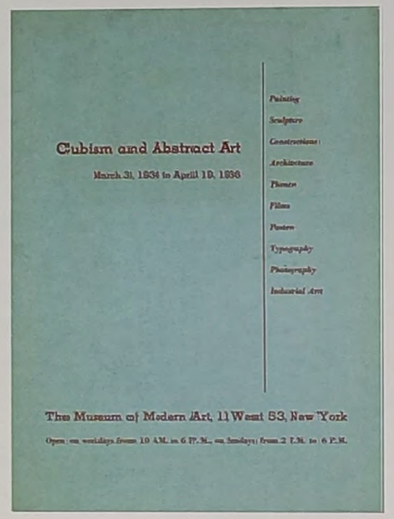
Cubism and Abstract Art. Preface, introduction, and essays by Alfred H. Barr, Jr. New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1936.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Number of artists: 113
Number of works: 386
Total attendance: unknown

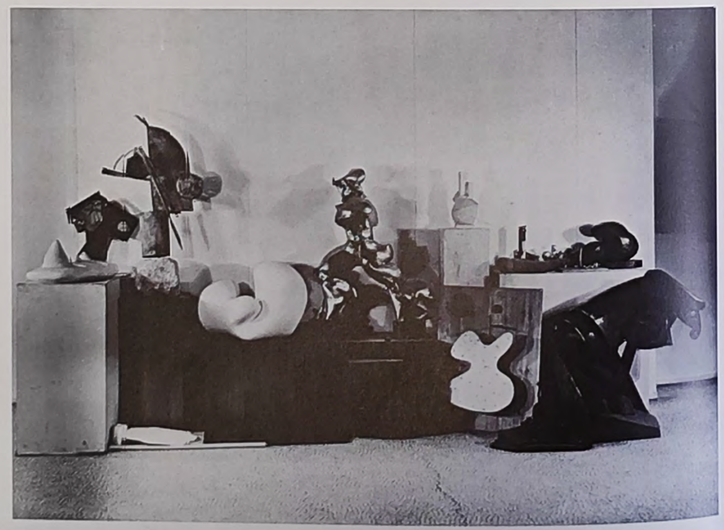
In 1936 museum director Alfred H. Barr, Jr., organized two major exhibitions at the Museum of Modern Art: "Cubism and Abstract Art" and "Fantastic Art, Dada, Surrealism." Supplemented by its scholarly catalog, the first of these shows was particularly influential, systematically presenting a linear narrative of modern art as progressing primarily through Cubism to abstraction. Barr's genealogy based on stylistic analysis would dominate the art historical understanding of this period for the next five decades, as well as govern the collecting and display practices of his museum. And via its influence on artists and critics, especially Clement Greenberg, it would fundamentally affect the development of American art.

Although Barr's view of modern art has been criticized as excessively formal and procrustean, the full title of the exhibition suggests the breadth of his vision. Going far beyond painting and sculpture, the show integrated architecture, industrial design, film, photography, and graphic design, in keeping with the multidisciplinary plan that he had developed upon the museum's founding in 1929. A truly didactic exhibition, as concerned with education as with connoisseurship, it was punctuated with explanatory panels and diagrams tracking movements and artists, the most famous of which was featured on the catalog cover. In both the installation and the didactic material, Barr traced two routes to abstraction: an intellectual, classical, and structural path from Paul Cézanne through Cubism to geometric abstraction and Constructivism, and an emotional, romantic, and organic path from Paul Gauguin through Henri Matisse and the Fauves to early Wassily Kandinsky. And though the focus was on formal development rather than biography or historical context, history entered in a fundamental way. Having spent significant time in the Soviet Union in 1928 and Germany in 1932 and 1933, Barr dedicated the exhibition and its catalog to the artists and architects "who have suffered at the hands of philistines with political power."



↑ Poster for "Cubism and Abstract Art." The exhibition received more than 12,000 visitors in the first ten days.

↗ The Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53rd Street, New York, 1936 (third building from left). Founded in 1929, the museum moved to this town house in 1932, having outgrown its original quarters. The exhibition included 386 works and occupied all four floors of the building. As part of the exhibition, a mobile by Alexander Calder hung from the fourth-floor cornice.

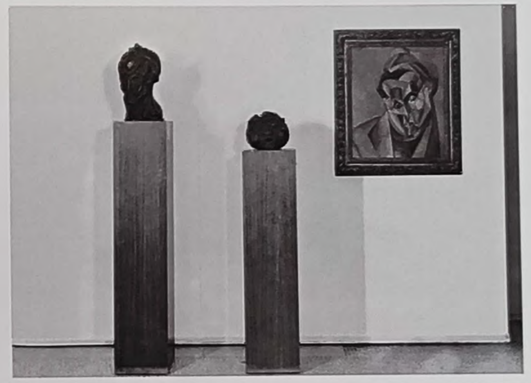


→ United States customs inspectors initially refused duty-free admission to 19 sculptures in the exhibition, rejecting the assertion that they were works of art. Sculptures by Alberto Giacometti, Hans Arp, Henri Laurens, Umberto Boccioni, and several other artists failed to represent human or animal forms, so they were originally classified as taxable building materials. A public battle ensued between the museum and government inspectors; ultimately, the museum paid a large fee for the works to pass through customs.

→ The origins of Cubism were represented by Henri Rousseau's *Child with a Doll* (left) and Georges Seurat's *The Quay* (right), among other works by Paul Gauguin, André Derain, Paul Cézanne, and Henri Matisse. The exhibition continued with Cubist works from 1900 to 1912, including *Dancer* by Pablo Picasso (rear, center).

↘ An African mask (center) was juxtaposed with Picasso's *Head of a Woman* (right) and *Head* (left).

↓ The exhibition continued with an installation of paintings highlighting the role played by Cézanne in the development of Analytical Cubism. Left to right: *Oranges* by Cézanne; *The Tube of Paint, Portrait of Braque*, and *The Poet* by Picasso; and *Town of Gardanne* by Cézanne.



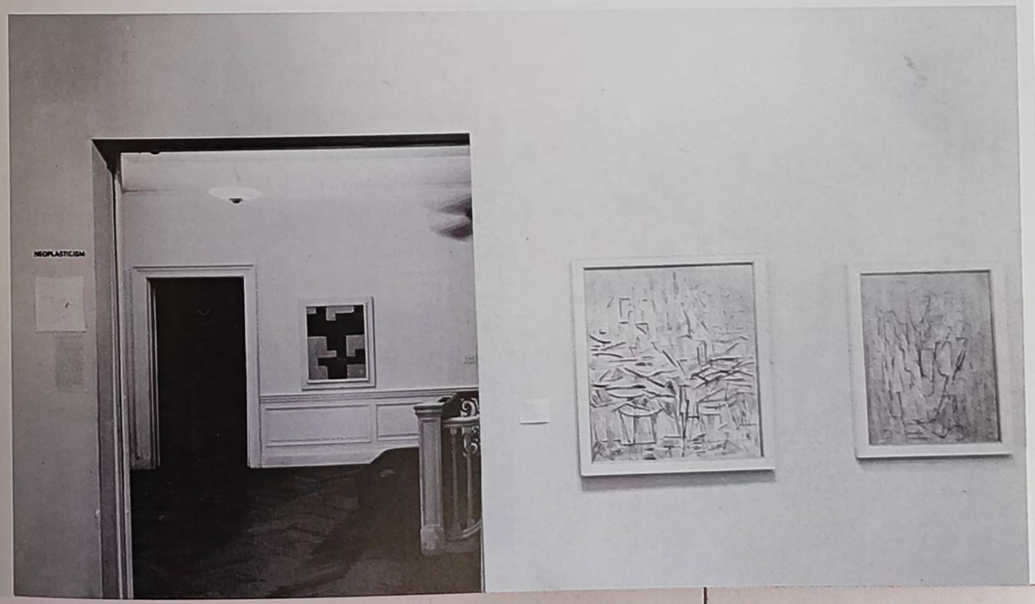
142 *1936 – Cubism and Abstract Art*

← The first floor contained works by the Italian Futurists, including Giacomo Balla's *Progressive Lines + Dynamic Sequences (The Swifts)* (rear wall, left), Umberto Boccioni's sculpture *Unique Forms of Continuity in Space* (center), and Gino Severini's *Armored Train* (third from right). Placed on a tall pedestal behind Boccioni's sculpture was a plaster cast of the *Winged Victory of Samothrace*, a fourth-century Greek sculpture whose flowing drapery Barr compared to the fluid lines of Boccioni's work.

↙ Works representing Synthetic Cubism, as well as other works made after 1912, were exhibited on the second floor. This section included *Music* by Georges Braque (far left), *Green Still Life* by Picasso (third painting from left), *Village in the Forest* by Fernand Léger (center), *The Battle of Port* by Roger de La Fresnaye (second painting from right), and *Still Life* by Juan Gris (far right).

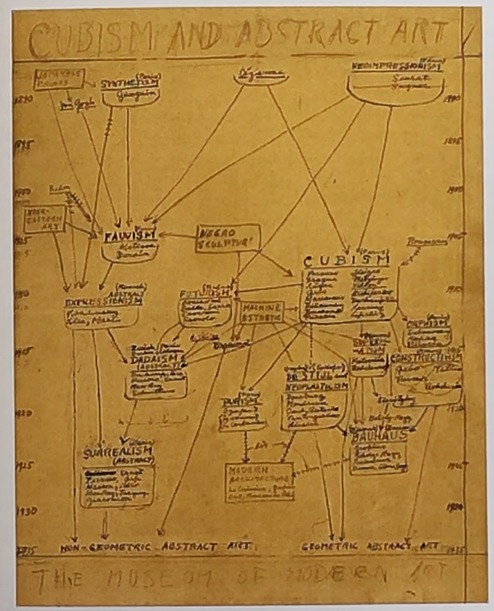
→ Many Cubist sculptures were included in the exhibition, among them (left to right) *Head* by Rudolf Belling, *Boxing* by Alexander Archipenko, *Head* by Henri Laurens, and *Walking Woman* by Archipenko. "Cubist sculpture throughout its course was secondary to Cubist painting and often closely dependent upon it," Barr wrote in the exhibition catalog.

↘ Barr's didactic diagrams and extended wall labels appeared throughout the exhibition, as seen in the gallery exploring the influence of Cubism on De Stijl and Neo-Plasticism (far left). Included in this section were Piet Mondrian's *Composition* of 1911 (second from right) and *Composition* by Hans Arp on the rear wall.

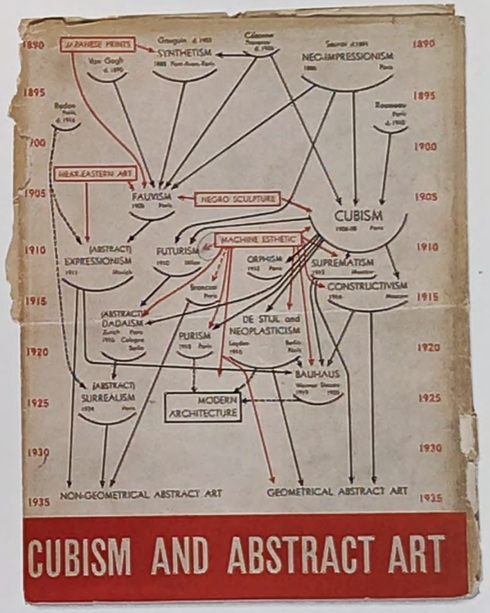


← This section of a fourth-floor gallery focused on the influence of Cubism on the development of Purism, specifically in modern architecture, furniture, and graphic design. On the wall, Barr mounted a Wassily Chair by Marcel Breuer (left) and an LC1 Basculant Chair by Le Corbusier (right). Le Corbusier's architectural model of Villa Savoye was installed in the center of the room, and in the corner, a vitrine held a chess set designed by Man Ray.

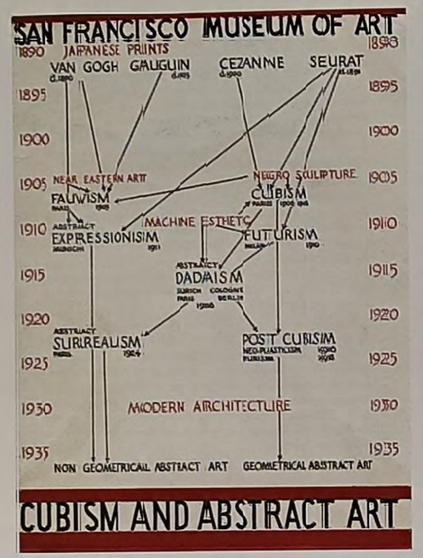
↙↙ Another section of the exhibition was devoted to the influence of Cubism on film and theater. The left half of this wall included abstract stills from Man Ray's *Emak Bakia* and Frederick Kiesler's set design for the play *R.U.R.* On the right half, Barr explored the influence of Suprematism on typography; this section included book jacket designs by David Sterenberg, Alexander Rodchenko, and El Lissitzky.



↑ One of Alfred H. Barr's hand-drawn diagrams of the evolution of modern art, c. 1936. This version lists artists associated with each movement, an element that was omitted from the final version used for the cover of the exhibition catalog.

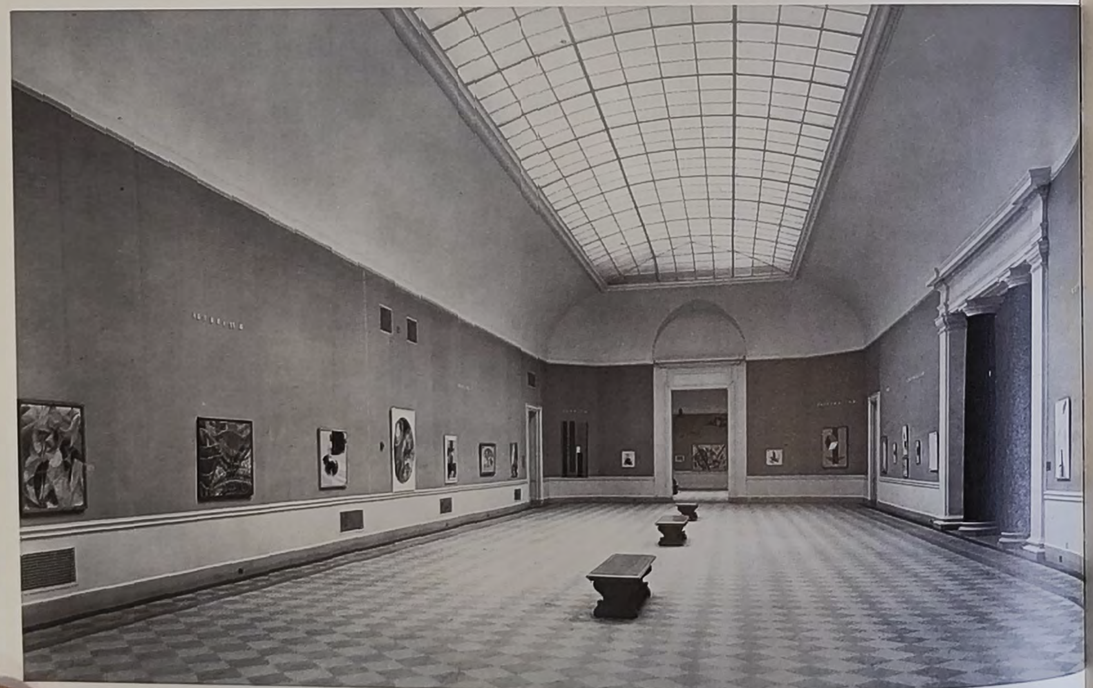


↗ Cover of the catalog for "Cubism and Abstract Art," 1936. The catalog contains Barr's scholarly account of the history of modern art, accompanied by selected illustrations, a checklist, and bibliography. (Excerpt, p. 247.)



← Exhibition brochure, "Cubism and Abstract Art," San Francisco Museum of Art, San Francisco, 27 July–24 August 1936, with an adapted version of Barr's diagram.

↓ At the San Francisco venue, the artistic movements were indicated directly on the wall, moving in general chronological order. Clockwise from left: Futurism, Orphism, Suprematism, and Constructivism. Mobiles by Alexander Calder were installed in the rear gallery.



Cubism and Abstract Art [exh. cat.]
Introduction [excerpt]
ALFRED H. BARR, JR.
New York, 1936

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THE EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY

Sometimes in the history of art it is possible to describe a period or a generation of artists as having been obsessed by a particular problem. The artists of the early fifteenth century for instance were moved by a passion for imitating nature. In the North the Flemings mastered appearances by the meticulous observation of external detail. In Italy the Florentines employed a profounder science to discover the laws of perspective, of foreshortening, anatomy, movement and relief.

In the early twentieth-century the dominant interest was almost exactly opposite. The pictorial conquest of the external visual world had been completed and refined many times and in different ways during the previous half millennium. The more adventurous and original artists had grown bored with painting facts. By a common and powerful impulse they were driven to abandon the imitation of natural appearance.

"ABSTRACT"

"Abstract" is the term most frequently used to describe the more extreme effects of this impulse away from "nature." It is customary to apologize for the word "abstract," but words to describe art movements or works of art are often inexact: we no longer apologize for applying the ethnological word "Gothic" to French thirteenth century art and the Portuguese word for an irregular pearl, "Baroque," to European art of the seventeenth century. Substitutes for "abstract" such as "non-objective" and "non-figurative" have been advocated as superior. But the image of a square is as much an "object" or a "figure" as the image of a face or a landscape; in fact "figure" is the very prefix used by geometers in naming A or B the abstractions with which they deal.

This is not to deny that the adjective "abstract" is confusing and even paradoxical. For an "abstract" painting is really a most positively concrete painting since it confines the attention to its immediate, sensuous, physical surface far more than does the canvas of a sunset or a portrait. The adjective is confusing, too, because it has the implications of both a verb and a noun. The verb *to abstract* means to *draw out of or away from*. But the noun *abstraction* is something already drawn out of or away from—so much so that like a geometrical figure or an amorphous silhouette it may have no apparent relation to concrete reality. "Abstract" is therefore an adjective which may be applied to works of art with a certain latitude, and, since no better or more generally used word presents itself, it shall be used from now on in this essay without quotation marks. . . .

NEAR-ABSTRACTIONS AND PURE-ABSTRACTIONS

The ambiguity of the word abstract as applied to works of art is really useful for it reveals the ambiguity and confusion which is inseparable from the subject. Perhaps keeping in mind the "verb" and "noun" meanings of abstract may help to clarify. For example, the Suprematist painting by Malevich is composed of a black and red square (fig. 113). This painting has absolutely no dependence upon natural forms. In it Malevich carried out his program by combining two of the elementary geometrical forms which he had set up as the fundamental vocabulary of Suprematism (figs. 111, 112). This painting is abstract in the "noun" sense of the word. Similar to it are Mondrian's *Composition* (fig. 157) and Gabo's *Space* construction (fig. 138). Different in character and genesis but equally abstract, at least in intention are certain paintings of Kandinsky who used non-geometrical (fig. 3, page 18) as well as geometrical forms (fig. 53). These works of Malevich, Mondrian, Gabo, Kandinsky, may be called pure-abstractions.

However, Mondrian's "plus and minus" composition of 1915 (fig. 142) despite its appearance is not a pure-abstraction. It is actually based upon a seascape just as van Doesburg's painting (fig. 144D) has been abstracted (note the verb) from the form of a cow. After 1920 Mondrian and van Doesburg abandoned the process of "abstracting," and composed pure-abstractions (figs. 146, 156).

Arp's reliefs (figs. 207, 208) are also impure abstractions even though their forms are so far removed from nature that it is often difficult to tell whether a given object represents a head or a cloud or Paolo and Francesca. Similarly, a Picasso landscape of 1912 may sometimes be mistaken for a still life or a portrait. The cords which tie these works to nature are tenuous, but unbroken—nor would the artist wish them broken. In fact Arp and Picasso usually name their works—"Guitar," "Head," or "Fork and Plate." Because of these vestiges of subject matter, even though little more than a name, it is clear that such works should be described as quasi- or pseudo- or near-abstractions. Perhaps the last is the least objectionable.

To resume: pure-abstractions are those in which the artist makes a composition of abstract elements such as geometrical or amorphous shapes. Near-abstractions are compositions in which the artist, starting with natural forms, transforms them into abstract or near-abstract forms. He approaches an abstract goal but does not quite reach it.

There are of course several variations within these two classifications and several without, for example, the famous Kandinsky *Improvisation, no. 30* (fig. 52) in which the artist intended to paint an abstract composition but unconsciously (he says) introduced a couple of cannon in the lower right hand corner. So we have in this case a near-abstraction which the artist had not intended to be a pure-abstraction.

DIALECTIC OF ABSTRACT ART

Abstract art today needs no defense. It has become one of the many ways to paint or carve or model. But it is not yet a kind of art which people like without some study and some sacrifice of prejudice. Prejudice can sometimes be met with argument, and for this purpose the dialectic of abstract painting and sculpture is superficially simple enough. It is based upon the assumption that a work of art, a painting for example, is worth looking at primarily because it presents a composition or organization of color, line, light and shade. Resemblance to natural objects, while it does not necessarily destroy these esthetic values, may easily adulterate their purity. Therefore, since resemblance to nature is at best superfluous and at worst distracting, it might as well be eliminated. Hans Arp, although he long ago abandoned pure-abstraction, has expressed this point of view with engaging humor.

"Art is a fruit growing out of a man like the fruit out of a plant, like the child out of the mother. While the fruit of the plant assumes independent forms and never strives to resemble a helicopter or a president in a cutaway, the artistic fruit of man shows, for the most part, ridiculous ambition to imitate the appearance of other things. I like nature but not its substitutes."[1]

Such an attitude of course involves a great impoverishment of painting, an elimination of a wide range of values, such as the connotations of subject matter, sentimental, documentary, political, sexual, religious; the pleasures of easy recognition; and the enjoyment of technical dexterity in the imitation of material forms and surfaces. But in his art the abstract artist prefers impoverishment to adulteration.

The painter of abstractions can and often does point to the analogy of music in which the elements of rhythmic repetition, pitch, intensity, harmony, counterpoint, are composed without reference to the natural sounds of either the "helicopter" or the "president in a cutaway." He looks upon abstract painting as independent painting, emancipated painting, as an end in itself with its own peculiar value.

To support their position defenders of abstract art during the past twenty-five years have often quoted a famous passage from the *Philebus* of Plato, Section 51c:[2]

> "Socrates: What I am saying is not indeed directly obvious. I must therefore try to make it clear. I will try to speak of the beauty of shapes, and I do not mean, as most people would think, the shapes of living figures, or their imitations in paintings, but I mean straight lines and curves and the shapes made from them, if you see what I mean. These are not beautiful for any particular reason or purpose, as other things are, but are always by their very nature beautiful, and give pleasure of their own quite free from the itch of desire; and colors of this kind are beautiful too, and give a similar pleasure." . . .

ABSTRACT ART AND SUBJECT MATTER

Further examination of subject matter not merely as a point of departure but as something of interest in itself may seem anomalous in a discussion of abstract art; for, abstract art, in so far as it is abstract, is presumably devoid of subject interest. Nevertheless, subject matter, although it can be ignored by the purist, has played a part of some importance in several of the movements which will be considered hereafter in these pages from a primarily formal point of view.

The Cubists seem to have had little conscious interest in subject matter. They used traditional subjects for the most part, figures, portraits, landscapes, still life, all serving as material for Cubist analysis.[3] On the contrary, to the Italian Futurists subject matter was of real importance. The exaltation of the machine and of the noise and confusion of modern life was as conscious a part of their program as the abstract analysis of movements and forces. The French Purists after the War used the silhouettes of deliberately chosen familiar objects with which to make near-abstract compositions.

In Germany the Russian Kandinsky passed beyond subject matter except when it appeared without the conscious intention of the artist. But Franz Marc's poetic sentiment for animals lingered even in the most Cubistic compositions and Feininger never eliminated entirely his romantic feeling for architecture and the sea. Klee's subject matter is as ingenious and interesting as his form.

The Dadaists, who mocked all kinds of art including abstract, had no prejudice against subject matter though sometimes they eliminated it. Their successors, the Surrealists, however, would, as conscientious Freudians, maintain that even squares and circles have symbolic significance. But even in much Surrealist painting subject and symbol are obscured or entirely lost in what is virtually an abstract design.

The cows and seascapes and dancers which lurk behind the earlier abstract compositions of Mondrian and Doesburg have no significance save as points of departure from the world of nature to the world of geometry. Malevich, however, who founded Suprematism by drawing a perfect square . . . discovered inspiration for some of his subsequent and more elaborate compositions in the airplane photographs of cities.

In summary it may be said that only in Futurism, Dadaism, Surrealism and Purism had subject matter any real importance, at least so far as the conscious program of the artists was concerned.

ABSTRACT ART AND POLITICS

It is its style, its abstract quality, as a general rule, and not its content or avowed program, that has from time to time involved abstract art in politics. Exceptions to this generalization were Futurism and Surrealism. The former in much of its program anticipated Fascism and the latter has been involved in Communism.

Pre-War Italian Futurism was latently Fascist in its patriotism, esthetic enjoyment of war and exhortation to the dangerous and dynamic life. Marinetti, its promoter, is now a Fascist senator, and Boccioni, its most important artist, died in military service, from the effects of a fall from his horse.

In Moscow after the Revolution, the Russian Futurists, Suprematists and Constructivists who had been artistically revolutionary under the Czar came into their own. For three years they dominated the artistic life of the larger cities, taught in the art academies, designed posters, floats in parades, statues to Marxian heroes and gigantic Cubistic facades to screen the Winter Palace during mass celebrations. Malevich's *White on White* of 1918 . . . might have counted as a tabula rasa upon which to build a new art for a new order, but it was as unintelligible to the proletariat as his earlier Suprematist pictures had been to the bourgeoisie. Tatlin's and Rodchenko's constructions may have been abstract exercises in technological discipline but what the land desperately needed was practical mechanics. Highly cultivated Bolsheviks, such as Trotzky and Lunacharsky, understood and supported the artists of the advance guard, but Lenin, with his broad and penetrating vision of the practical needs of the U.S.S.R., found no joy in the Suprematists, the Cubo-Futurists and Tectonic Primitivists. He summarized the left-wing art and literature of 1920 as "the infantile disorder of Leftism" and felt that movies were more useful to the Soviet State. In 1921 came the New Economic Policy, the era of reconstruction and practical materialism. An attitude of toleration towards Leftism turned to impatience. A schism appeared in the ranks of the artists themselves. One faction wanted to maintain art for art's sake; their opponents wanted to put art at the service of the new order. The atelier of Pevsner and Gabo at the Moscow Academy was closed; they and Lissitzky left for Berlin; Kandinsky left for Germany to join the Bauhaus; Malevich took a post in less influential Leningrad; and most of the Suprematists and Constructivists who stayed in Moscow left art, in the narrow sense of the word, for typography, photography, posters, movies, engineering, stage design, carpentry—anything but painting or sculpture. Today abstraction or stylization in art is still considered a "left deviation" in the U.S.S.R. and is discouraged.

The political atmosphere of the Dadaists, the West-European contemporaries of the Russian Leftists, might be described as anarchist. That of their successors, the Surrealists, was Communist, although it would be hard to find anything specifically Communist in their paintings. The schism which had divided the Moscow Constructivists of 1920 reappeared ten years later in Surrealism. Aragon, the Surrealist writer, insisted, as Tatlin and Rodchenko had done, that the artist should place his talents practically and exclusively at the service of the Revolution. The Constructivist heretics who insisted upon the independence of art had found it advisable to leave Communist Moscow for Social Democratic Germany; but the Surrealists, Communist or not, continue to work in Paris without serious molestation from either the Left or the Right (except when showing films).

Abstract art which had begun in Munich flourished in post-War Germany. In addition, the esthetic ideals of the Dutch Stijl group and of the Russian Constructivists were brought to Berlin by refugees from active Soviet philistinism or its more passive Dutch equivalent. Gradually abstract art, and the architecture which it influenced, became associated with the Social Democracy in the minds of its bitter enemies, the National Socialists. Modern architecture of the "International Style" had been used extensively in the housing developments authorized by Social Democratic burgomasters.

To the Nazis the cultural expression of the shameful fourteen years between the Treaty of Versailles and the National Resurgence of 1933 was—and is—anathema. Abstract art was considered *Kunstbolschewismus*,[4] and after the Nazi revolution many artists were dismissed from official positions or otherwise "discouraged." The flat roof and the white, clean lines of "Bauhaus" architecture were likewise forbidden in favor of a renascence of genuine Biedermeyer (the German version of the International style of the 1830s).

About the same time, in the early thirties, the U.S.S.R. turned against modern architecture in favor of a monumental style derived from Imperial Rome and the Czarist 18th century. But Fascist Italy and conservative England, to complete the confusion, accepted modern architecture with enthusiasm. The railroad station in Florence has been completed in the *stile razionale*, and Lubetkin, a former Russian Constructivist, has designed new buildings . . . for that British stronghold, the London Zoo.

This essay and exhibition might well be dedicated to those painters of squares and circles (and the architects influenced by them) who have suffered at the hands of philistines with political power.[5] . . .

1. "Notes from a diary," *Transition* N. 21, Paris, 1932. Quoted in Sweeney, Bibl. 93, p. 30.
2. For an interesting commentary on this passage see Phillip McMahon: "Would Plato find artistic beauty in machines?" *Parnassus*, vol. VII, 6–8, February 1935. Prof. McMahon emphasizes Plato's dislike for art and esthetic delight in geometry.
3. In spite of the fact that the Cubists themselves and their most ardent admirers attached little importance to subject matter, Meyer Schapiro of Columbia University advances an interesting theory that consciously or unconsciously the Cubists through their subject matter reveal significant preoccupation with the bohemian and artistic life. It is possible of course that the things in a Cubist still life: bottles, playing-cards, dice, violins, guitars, pipes, which Dr. Schapiro calls "private instruments of idle sensation," may be a direct rather than a symbolic inventory of objects in the Cubist's studio; and the painting of letters, introduced by Braque into Cubism, may be, like his use of imitation wood and marble textures, merely a reminiscence of his early apprenticeship as a house painter, rather than a symbol of the art of literature; and the repetition of such word-fragments with artistic connotations as Étude, Bal, Bach and so forth may be balanced by the names of daily newspapers, *Figaro*, *L'Intran*, *Journal*—and "Hennessy" . . . by "Baker's Cocoa" . . . Nevertheless, the continual repetition of figure paintings called *Pierrot*, *Guitarriste*, *Clarinettiste*, *Harlequin*, in later Cubist pictures suggests a concern with the world of art instead of the world of life and may consequently be taken as a symbol of the modern artist's social maladjustment—which is, however, not limited to Cubists. In any case the iconography of Cubism should not be ignored.
4. For example, nine of the artists represented in this exhibition have left Germany since 1933. Only one of them is a "non-Aryan."
5. As this volume goes to press the United States Customs has refused to permit the Museum of Modern Art to enter as works of art nineteen pieces of more or less abstract sculpture under a ruling which requires that sculpture must represent an animal or human form. . . . They are all considered dutiable as plaster, bronze, stone, wood, etc., and have been entered under bond. The hand-painted canvases in the exhibition were, however, admitted free, no matter how abstract.

"Modern Museum's Abstract Art: Cubism, Constructivism, Surrealism and All Other Isms Included"

HENRY MCBRIDE

New York Sun — 7 March 1936

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The long-awaited Abstract Art Exhibition at the Modern Museum is now upon us. What will the public make of it? That's the question! Probably just what it makes out of all other problems involving complete wisdom and complete knowledge of contemporary affairs (including politics)—confusion! Complete self-knowledge is not available to the living and is only to be had, if then, in the obituaries; yet our educators always will be attempting history while it's in the making!

For the new show is being historical about a thing that is not yet dead. Consequently, it is addressed to the professors and not to the impetuous, adorable, uninstructed public. It is very well done, I hasten to say, in so far as such a presentation can be well done. The sequences and derivations of the movement are very well indicated. The modern world has been effectively scoured for revealing examples and enough amazing productions have been recruited from the ends of the earth to keep the professors agog for several years to come and, incidentally, to assure alarmed citizens that the entire world is concerned in the matter. But though abstract art is here in plenty, "abstract beauty" is not placarded in a way to win new converts.

My contention is that the public is never concerned with statistics but with results. So a museum's business is always with the superlative successes in any chosen line, and with practically nothing else, leaving the sequences and the "lesser-examples-that-prove-things" to the schools for would-be professionals. It is for that reason that I have never been content with the

Louvre since it abandoned that central Salon Carré that brought the people, before the war, face to face with its supreme possessions and really, more than anything else, gave world-wide fame to *Mona Lisa* and *The Man with the Glove*. If you wish to educate the millions in art you must not confuse them at the beginning with lesser examples.

CAUSES FOR FELICITATION

Being, however, one of the "professors" myself, I confess to taking both pleasure and instruction in the event, and even to admire the courage with which the directors of the museum smite the public in the eye on the very door-step, so to speak, of the show. Almost the first picture to be encountered is that terrific work by Picasso, called *The Dancer*, painted almost thirty years ago, when the artist was trying to incorporate some of the demonic fury of the African carvings into his work, and succeeding so well that the picture is now likely to send any unsuspecting American lady who encounters it into what we call "the jitters." That, of course, is not the highest purpose in art, and perhaps it would have been more tactful to have prepared visitors for *The Dancer* by degrees. The initiated, it is true, who know that Picasso is the greatest figure in the modern movement, will look upon it as an interesting step in the progress toward such masterpieces as *Les Trois Masques* and *The Seated Women*; masterpieces, unfortunately, not included in the show and which would have been enough in themselves for a Salon Carré, had there been a Salon Carré.

By way of partial recompense for this brusqueness in presentation, the museum does very nicely by the Boccioni bronze, which is just around the corner in the next alcove. This is the bronze that was almost refused entrance into the country by the custom house officers on the score that it wasn't art. But it is, unmistakably. Anyone can see that now, posed, as it is, in an agreeable light, and chaperoned by a big plaster cast of the Louvre's antique "Victory of Samothrace." The custom house people, by way of punishment, should be compelled to come to the show every day for a month and sit in front of the two pieces and learn definitely the difference between art and merchandise. The Boccioni bronze has the ripple and flow of life, of a figure moving in a breeze, or as Jimmy Savvo says so marvelously in the turn he is at present doing in one of the local theaters—"like a dream walking."

HOPES LIKELY VAIN

The cataclysmic crush to see the van Goghs earlier this winter may have bred in the bosoms of the sponsors of this exhibition a desire for "a repeat," and though I fear, for reasons stated at the beginning of this article, that the wish may not be fulfilled for them, nevertheless there are a number of pieces here exposed, that might again arouse the mob spirit, were the proper combination of hysterics, scandal and vituperation marshalled against them.

For instance, the celebrated *Nude Descending a Stairway*, by Marcel Duchamp, which once set this entire country by the ears, has a wall-panel all to itself, and must again enchant the young people of today in the manner in which it formerly enchanted their fathers, for it returns this time, if you please, a classic. A second classic is another glittering brass bird by Brancusi, to which also, the Customs House officials might pay a visit of etiquette, since once they were quite unkind to Brancusi. Still another reappearance is that of the gorgeous early "Abstract" by Kandinsky, which is as handsome and as fresh as when it first flashed upon startled New Yorkers at the Armory Show.

But reappearances are not apt to be inflammatory. The talkative part of the new generation seems to have grown up in full consciousness and full approval of the works that have been mentioned and is now struggling with entirely new problems, and which are illustrated sufficiently in the exhibition to enable those who wish, to take sides. These problems are posed for the most part by a group of artists loosely ranked together under the banner of "Surrealism." Those who get farthest away from nature in this new group, such as Hans Arp, Hélion and Mondrian, ought, logically, to invite the most discussion; yet since they vanish so far away from Mother Earth into the realms where the planets speak to each other in esoteric terms, the probabilities are that our public will not believe they mean it and will not, consequently, get very much heated.

SOME HOPE FOR TROUBLE

Paul Klee, the German, and Joan Miró, the Spaniard, on the other hand, just because they do deal in more approachable matter and indulge in whimsicalities which we can fully measure and appreciate, may come in for the onslaughts of the Philistines—if the Philistines do get busy. Joan Miró's big composition, in one of the upper rooms, is, in the present writer's opinion, one of the greatest triumphs of Surrealism, and it is to be hoped that it may find its way eventually in the modern museum's permanent collection.

The show, as a whole, however, is Pablo Picasso's. He walks away with it, as might have been expected. In every department he makes himself felt, but in several of his great compositions on the second floor galleries he wins the battle single-handed for abstract art and convinces the unprejudiced that they are face to face with undoubted masterpieces.

There were a few murmurs to be heard on the occasion of the private view that the battle need not have been fought in quite so single-handed a fashion, but we can let such murmurs pass. The *Trois Masques* would have helped the show, as has been said, but then it has already been exhibited in New York on two occasions; and Léger, Hélion and Braque, who could have been better represented, have frequently exposed here and are thoroughly admired by our "advanced" pupils. Absolute perfection in exhibitions is not to be thought of here on earth; and we ought to be satisfied with just a portion of perfection. I am, at any rate.

"The Abstractionists of Foreign Origin"

[excerpt]

ROYAL CORTISSOZ

New York Herald Tribune — 8 March 1936

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A year ago, at the Whitney Museum, there was a demonstration of what American abstractionists could do with their recondite processes. Now at the Museum of Modern Art their European contemporaries have their chance. They have had chances before, to be sure, in this or that exhibition, but the present occasion is one for a full dress parade. There are nearly four hundred numbers in the catalogue and the works on view illustrate, I suppose, every conceivable phase of the subject. Room is even found for a few artists, such as Cézanne, Gauguin and van Gogh, who are somewhat ill at ease, looking almost academic beside Brancusi's well remembered *Bird in Space* and that curious performance by Marcel Duchamp, *Nude Descending a Staircase*, which made such a sensation in the Armory Show of 1913. The affair is all very comprehensive and useful. One may survey here the activities of the abstractionist painters and sculptors and may trace their influence upon architecture, in the theater, in photography, and so on. The Modern Museum once more admirably fulfills its function as a laboratory for the exposition of current experimentalism. That it puts forward any justification for the particular experiments made in this instance is, however, another question altogether.

IS "ABSTRACTION" AN ART?

Mr. Barr, the director of the Museum, states the situation as he sees it. The earlier artists, he says, "were moved by a passion for imitating nature." (It is permissible to observe that they also had some other ideas.) He finds that in our own time "the more adventurous and original artists had grown bored with painting facts," so they took to making compositions of "abstract elements, such as geometrical or amorphous shapes." There remains an interesting problem. In breaking with the hypothesis dominant for centuries, the hypothesis on which we all understood a work of art to be based, the abstractionists took upon their shoulders the burden of proof that their own hypothesis had validity. They have had some thirty years in which to do this and I cannot see that they have yet got beyond the stage of assertion. Assertion is now and then momentarily efficacious. Somewhere in *Romola*, as the memory of the novel comes back to me across the years, there is an instance of what it will do. An unwanted guest obtains admission to the scene of a conspiracy by whispering a pseudo password into the sentry's ear, and, George Eliot remarks: "There are some people who, if you say 'I am a buffalo,' will let you pass." The abstractionist has "go by" in some such fashion. All he has had to do has been to jot down some vertical and horizontal lines upon canvas, after the mode of the Dutchman Piet Mondrian in his *Composition* (No. 181), and to announce himself as an "Abstractionist," and the Kröller-Müller Foundation at Wassenaar has taken him to its bosom. All that the Russian Kasimir Malevich has had to do has been to paint a tip-tilted square of white upon a ground of another white and to call himself a "Suprematist." He has been promptly recognized as the founder of a "movement." Who could resist the Mesopotamian designation of an artist as an "Orphist"? But there is a rather deadly comment to be made upon the business of hypnotic nomenclature. In the stuff behind it there is no esthetic nourishment whatever.

Whistler's pithy dictum is apposite again. "Art is art," quoth he, "and mathematics is mathematics." It is one thing to produce a kind of H. G. Wellsian wallpaper and call it a picture. It is another thing to ask to have it taken seriously. There cannot be the smallest objection in the world to the exercise of those ingenuities which the abstractionists possess. But why call the results art? Another Russian, Antoine Pevsner, makes out of celluloid an *Abstract Portrait of Marcel Duchamp* (No. 197). Both men were probably amused by the venture. But I can find no esthetic pleasure in it, nor can I find anything amusing. I am struck, too, all through the exhibition, by the absence of that originality to which Mr. Barr refers. Never was there such a vast aggregation of painting with so thin a trickle of individuality running through it. The general effect is of a fundamental sameness, of an enslavement to a mechanical method. The painters and sculptors strive, presumably, to express themselves in cubistic and other ways, but they express, after all, the common denominator of an arid convention. What could be more conventional than this welter of meaningless line and color? I say "meaningless" because even when the abstractionist harks back to representationalism in his substance or in his title he gives the beholder nothing tangible on which to bite. The great Picasso—that "gigolo of geometry," as Rothenstein called him—hovers near the point of telling us something tangible in his *Portrait of Braque* (No. 209), but when we come to his *Painter and His Model* (No. 228) comprehension is completely baffled. Well, the exhibition serves the purpose of showing what the abstractionist has been doing. It does not offer any perceptible reason for his doing it. The logic of the movement is summed up in the *Composition* by Piet Mondrian which I reproduce. . . .

"Shock Troops in Review: Museum of Modern Art Opens a Pageant of the Cubists and Abstractionists"

EDWARD ALDEN JEWELL

New York Times — 8 March 1936

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You can approach the gargantuan abstract show at the Museum of Modern Art (March 3–April 19) in one of many ways—or, if you prefer and be qualified, in all of the possible ways simultaneously. Of course, if you have a closed mind, nothing will come of the visit and you might better stay at home, snug and slippered, with your comforting airtight convictions. The Museum of Modern Art, be assured, is no place for mollusks.

After suggesting two methods of approach that may be considered polar extremities, I shall cross my fingers, and back, for the time being, into a modest cell of meditation. It is within the scope neither of my knowledge nor of a brief Sunday article to give, once and for all, a clear, concise, detailed, authentic, irrefutable and definitive résumé of the entire modern movement from the Post-Impressionists to the year 1936. Though human life on this earth has changed in about every respect so enormously within the last decade (within, come to think of it, the last twelve-month) discretion still remains the better part of valor.

Besides, there is always the lethal fear that if the inquisitive scrutinize too closely a complicated mechanism he may end up upsetting the works. It happened once, you remember, and was recorded in these lines attributed to an Oxford student:

A centipede was happy quite,
Until a frog in fun
Said, "Pray, which leg comes after which?"
This raised her mind to such a pitch
She lay distracted in the ditch
Considering how to run.

Now these, I should say, might be called antipodal pursuits of the goal this amazing demonstration represents; a demonstration that ought to pile up quite as grand an attendance total as did the recent van Gogh show, despite the fact that none of the twentieth century modernists cut off his ear and sent it to a prostitute.

(1) You may pass through the door as a profound scholar, avid and—it goes without saying—equipped to analyze each segment; to perceive these myriad parts hinging on one another; stemming and merging, to form at length a vast, complex, yet perfectly coordinated whole. As you proceed your mind trots beside you like an obedient vade-mecum, rhythmically breathing an impeccable prose style, all its periods lucid as rain-washed air and every footnote crisply concerned with the reference that may be followed up at leisure beside the midnight lamp.

(2) You may pass through the door as a frank, carefree hedonist who has provided himself with

a stopover round-trip ticket to Dreamland or some other lavish amusement park. For you the fiddler plays his gayest air, the motley turns his nimblest handspring. For you, who have no scholarship worth mentioning, it will just be an uninterrupted succession of lovely dip-the-dips and bump-the-bumps and the world's-fattest-ladies and most horrendous hair-raisers. Will it matter a hoot whether the trained fleas come first or the Battle of Verdun? The Eskimo Village or the salt water taffy? You may start at the bottom or you may start at the top. The experience will be one long, beautiful, miscellaneous, titillating vision of cock-eyed splendor. A thousand thrills to the minute, and not a single footnote.

Many of us, no doubt, will follow a kind of middle course in this matter of approach to what must without reservation be pronounced one of the most brilliant objective inventories of the modern movement in certain of its phases ever produced.

While it is probable, I suspect, that few of us could hope unaided to reduce the terrifying whole to so neat a plan as that drawn up by Alfred Barr and illustrated in the chart herewith submitted, conversely to accept the developments this ambitious show dramatizes as mere larks played for our diversion (or to mock us) would argue not alone our blindness to art, but even a failure to glimpse what is taking place all about us from day to day in the common realm of human affairs.

Be what it may the hue or "ism" of its garb, art is ever a vital concomitant of life. Edward F. Rothschild, in his keen little book, "The Meaning of Unintelligibility in Modern Art," observes:

"If we regard our culture with a certain amount of intellectual curiosity we shall be rewarded, because there is no age in which we can live so completely as in our own. Life is more important than art; but if we understood life we should have no difficulty in understanding art, which is its most eloquent expression."

Does this art that at the moment confronts us seem to betoken oftener an escape from "reality" than a reported awareness of what is afoot in the world? If so it cannot be dismissed, on that count, as irrelevant. The very impulse involved in such a flight is too symptomatic to be ignored. When, and only when, we are prepared to look upon modern art as an inevitable outcome of our time, shall we, I think, be able to dig beneath a chaotic surface and begin to get at the motivating fundamentals.

However, this should not be a grim crusade but instead an exuberant quest. Doggedness may be a virtue indeed, yet it has never, single-handed, scaled Parnassus.

As a matter of fact, though learned exegesis tends sometimes, alas, to make it appear so, abstraction is by no means a stranger to our everyday experience. The children in the street abundantly encounter it as they romp; the business man, alert and hard-boiled at his desk, has constant traffic with the intangible; as for the mathematician, as for the scientist, he would be lost without it, chained to the particular and cut off from access to the general.

Well, the chief obstacle is, perhaps, that art's confederate must be the eye—of all the senses most confirmed in literal habits. Spend an hour with great music, and the problem that furrows our brow in the museum scarcely presents itself. For the mind (appalling favoritism, this!) welcomes without protest what delights the ear.

Said Keats:

Heard melodies are sweet,
But those unheard are sweeter . . .

It may be constructed as in part a challenge to us to learn to see our symphonies. Not, in the final analysis, to "see" them, either, so much as, in Santayana's phrase, to "learn to love in all things mortal only what is eternal."

But we, the anxious, the harassed spectators—we who go about trying so hard to understand abstraction as presented to us in terms of color and line and plastic form—are we uniquely at fault when failure crowns our efforts? No, I am inclined to think that the artists themselves should be asked to shoulder their just share of blame. Too often they, who ought to be bearers of light, have walked in darkness, or flown in such fog as would keep any sensible aviator on the ground.

As has been argued again and again in these columns, confusion always ensues when a natural object (so designated in the title—viz., "Head of Woman" or "Violin") is found to be in no sense an "abstraction" of that particular object, but instead an arbitrarily arranged pattern of shapes. Some "motifs" from the alleged prototype may, it is true, be incorporated, but this does not amount to abstraction in the sense proposed. It is begging the question.

On the other hand, if we look at these frequently beautiful patterns just as detached decorative abstractions (as visual music, let us say) architecturally contrived, then we may surrender ourselves without stint to pleasure that is sometimes very real. With a few exceptions (such, for instance, as the experimental futurist *Dog on Leash* by Balla) everything in this exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art may be classified as decorative. Now the decoration will prove to be no more than bizarre, grotesque or cute; again it will prove as handsome, as richly and searchingly wrought, as anything produced in this field since art began.

A memorandum issued since the press was received on Monday clarifies to some extent the plan followed in arranging the material. On the first floor is essayed the development of "analytical Cubism," 1906–13; also a dramatization of the influence exerted by Negro sculpture and Cézanne, and a glimpse of Italian futurism. The second floor is devoted to Cubism after 1912, painting and sculpture; the third floor to "geometrical abstract movements growing out of Cubism"; the fourth floor to "the non-geometrical abstract tradition."

Especially the third and fourth floor groups are subdivided to embrace many "isms" (among them Orphism, Neo-Plasticism, Purism, Suprematism, Constructivism, Dadaism, Machinism and Surrealism).

Alfred H. Barr Jr., the director, has furnished the show throughout with comparative juxtapositions of immense value. We have only to consider, for example, the tellingly revealed relationship that links Cubism and African art, or the sequence that begins with Gauguin and winds up with Kandinsky. In such (and often much more subtle) cross-references the present show abounds.

It will surely be felt that the effect of the abstract art movement in realms of architecture, furniture, the stage, the screen and typography might have been illustrated on a more illuminating scale. But with respect to painting and sculpture the survey, if deliberately omitting certain salient avenues of exploration, leaves little indeed to be desired.

"The Art Galleries: The Course of Abstraction"

LEWIS MUMFORD

New Yorker — 21 March 1936

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Often it is not till one is halfway through writing a book that one discovers what the opening chapter should contain. Something like this seems to be true of the development of the Modern Museum of Art. The present monumental show, tracing the movement of Cubist and abstract art, belongs logically, perhaps, to the Museum's first year's exhibitions. But there is this compensation for its belatedness: the resources, the organizing talent, and the insight that produced the exhibition were not available half a dozen years ago. Perhaps the great weakness of today's show is that—was it out of deference to the Whitney Museum, which had an abstract show last year?—American art is not adequately represented.

Before going over the ground, we might clear our minds if we faced the fact that the abstractions of the present generation of painters offer no essentially new elements in art. To begin with, all painting and sculpture is abstract; even at its most realistic, it is a displacement of something that exists in life with a symbol that has only a limited number of points of resemblance. A sculptured head can smile, but it cannot wink; it can also live without the aid of a body and the usual apparatus for breathing and for digesting food. Every work of art is an abstraction from time; it denies the reality of change and decay and death. Only on a Grecian urn can a lover console himself over his inability to catch his mistress with the reflection that beauty and love will remain permanent.

Visual art, again, demands an abstraction from the four other senses. It belongs to a world where taste and smell and sound are absent, where touch exists by means of a visual counterfeit, and where (at least in painting) the movement of the observer and the many-sidedness of things are lost in a static image. The truth is that almost all that we call culture is based upon a system of abstractions; the signs of language and the symbols of art and religion are mere shorthand curlicues for the reality they indicate or express. The most fulsomely realistic genre picture of a country grocer's store in Kansas is closer to a geometrical form by Ozenfant than it is to the patch of life it seeks to imitate. The man in the street has been looking at abstract art all his life without realizing it. What he falsely calls realism is only a more familiar series of abstractions.

By nature, any single work of art is a thinning down of concrete experience. If this were its only characteristic, one would have to reject art as a weak surrogate for life, as the Philistine does—a tepid beverage, for people who are not strong enough to take life neat. But art makes up for its limitations by a series of special advantages. By means of abstractions, certain qualities of experience can be intensified. Divorced from immediate practical necessities, art can respond to experiences our daily duties usually shut away from us, and it can rearrange our perceptions and feelings in new patterns, more significant for us than life as we have actually lived it. In a period of social development, art can make us anticipate new experiences, and put us in a frame of mind to welcome them, as the sharp eye of a good hunter will pick out a bird in a faint stir of leaves, before it takes wing. It was in this fashion that the Renaissance painters, who invented deep-space perspective, and built it up on a strict mathematical basis, prepared us for the visual background for our new conquest of space through maps and ships and rapid means of locomotion.

How does this apply to the development of abstract art during the last thirty years? As Mr. Alfred Barr has well shown in arranging the exhibition, that movement had many aspects, and the new abstractions pointed to many different modes of experience. But surely one of its main expressions was an attempt to symbolize in new forms the world in which we actually live, to call attention to those particular experiences that alter our spatial relations and feelings, and to represent, by means of the image, the same attitudes and perceptions that were being expressed in the physical sciences, in psychology, in literature, and finally in all the mechanical arts. So, far from being divorced from the currents of life, the abstract artists were closer to the vital experiences of their period than were the painters who kept to more traditional forms. The meaning of any particular painting was not always clear, nor were the efforts at expression always successful. But the connection between the image and contemporary reality was close.

The facts about abstract art have been obscure partly for the reason that artists, and the few critics who understood their aims, were more concerned with the formal and technical problems raised by these new abstractions than with their underlying content. In fact, in a revolt against banal illustration, the abstractionists even claimed that their art had no contents, except lines, surfaces, and volumes, duly organized; they attributed to paintings and sculptures the characteristics of architecture, without being able to supply either the rational uses of a building or the symbolic uses of a monument to justify their new organizations of form. They deceived themselves, these critics and artists. Their forms were sometimes undecipherable, but our initial inability to read their unknown language was no proof that it would remain meaningless once we had a clue to its word forms and vocabulary.

Take the derivation of the early Cubist forms from African sculptures. Is it not absurd here to overemphasize the form and forget the social milieu? This drawing upon Negro art for a fresh impulse was a sign of a new respect for primitive races and cultures that came in with the twentieth century. People began to realize that although the primitive African had not invented the steam engine, he had successfully expressed in his art certain primal feelings evoked by fear and death; likewise, he knew a great deal of essential lore about the erotic life, which the "civilized" white had emptied out of himself, as Havelock Ellis's contemporary treatises on the psychology of sex were demonstrating. Remember, too, the impending fear of war that ran in successive spasms through the people of Europe. In his admirable essay on Strauss's "Elektra," Mr. Paul Rosenfeld has pointed out how these terrorized mass feelings expressed themselves in Strauss's music, prophecy of the catastrophe to come. So with the rigid shapes, the barbarous heads, the deformed fragmentary images in the early Cubist paintings—the human body exploded on the canvas. Half a dozen years later, the war came, and those shattered forms were "realized" on the battlefield.

I do not say that this is the whole story, for one may look at the Cubist's analytic dismemberment of form in still another way. The disappearance of the realistic image and the building up of a picture from a series of separate points of view have a scientific reference. This side of abstract art connects closely with Einstein's first theory of relativity, published in 1905; an announcement of a fresh way of looking at the world, in which the

fixed station of the observer was no longer, as in Renaissance painting, taken as one of the main elements that determine all the lines in the picture. Do not misunderstand. Einstein did not produce Cubism any more than Cubism produced Einstein. They were, rather, both contemporary formulations of the same common facts of modern experience. Looking at it in this fashion, one may better appreciate Marcel Duchamp's beautiful painting, *Nude Descending a Staircase*. Plainly, it was an attempt to incorporate time and movement in a single structure. That picture is one of the masterpieces of the Cubist movement, although originally it was one of the chief targets for mockery. Patently, such symbolism often failed to come off. Witness the comically feeble and pathetic painting *Dog on a Leash* by the Italian Futurist, Giacomo Balla.

The next great contribution of the abstract painters was to prepare the eye more acutely for the new rhythms and the new spatial arrangements and the new tactile qualities of an environment that had been radically transformed by the machine. The engineer, in the course of the previous century, had often dealt with aesthetic problems accidentally; occasionally he would even make aesthetic decisions. But in the paintings of Léger, the sculptures of Brancusi, Lipchitz, Duchamp-Villon, and Gabo, there was a recognition of the fact that the machine had by itself profoundly altered our feeling for form. We liked hard things, finished things, accurate things, required less assurance of solidity, of static ballance, and of symmetry, and found a fresh use for glass to symbolize that new world in which electric waves and light rays could pass through "solid" bodies. The language of these new symbols has scarcely been worked out even now, but one cannot doubt its importance in projecting the new facts of our experience.

This aspect of abstract art led directly into the new machine arts and crafts, and one of the best features of the present exhibition is its demonstration of the effects of these new symbols upon typography, poster art, stage design, architecture, and furniture. Sometimes the suggested relationship is too tenuous, as in the composition of *Danse Russe* by Doesburg and the plan of a building by van der Rohe in 1922, but in the construction of the penguin pond for the London Zoo by Lubetkin in 1935, the connection between the new pure forms and their practical application in the other arts is clear and undeniable. True, the lead taken by painting during the nineteen-twenties in ordering new architectural forms often worked as perniciously as a very similar influence did in the Renaissance, but this proves, if it proves anything, the extraordinary *practical* effectiveness of abstract art.

I have no space to deal with that other great wing of abstract art, which began with van Gogh and developed through the various phases of Expressionism up to the orderly nightmares of the Surréalistes. But these subjective explorations parallel and re-express a whole series of psychological interpretations which are as characteristic of our modern period as our achievements in the machine. At all events, these two broad schools of abstract art, the objective and the subjective, the school of form and the school of feeling, the technological and the personal, have done much to clarify our sense of the modern world. What was achieved during this period of experiment, achieved sometimes under extravagant risks and not without losses and derangements, remains one of the permanent contributions to the tradition of Western art. Only those who have been through these major experiences have earned the privilege of going beyond them. And no one has the right to ignore them.

"The 'Abstract' Exhibition"

GLENN WESSELS

Argonaut — San Francisco, 31 July 1936

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It is difficult for the average American layman to understand why a whole generation of painters deliberately chose the esoteric rather than the popular, the internal rather than the superficial—why, at the hands of these ascetic men, the appreciation of painting became a mind-wringing discipline rather than the easy sensual titillation which characterized it in Venice, at the Court of Louis XVI or with English portraitists. We are, as a people, not given to faith in the reality of thoughts, but rather in the reality of things, and the earnest concern with intangibles of the Fauves, Cubists, Expressionists, Constructionists, et al., smacks of insanity to a nation of predisposed Pragmatists and Behaviorists. We distrust introspection in individuals in favor of mass judgments. For us the popular is the universal and when one talks of universal art we take it to mean universally understandable. So we approach the School of Paris at a disadvantage.

The present show of cubism and abstract art at the San Francisco Museum of Art is primarily arranged to make easier the way for the American public to the appreciation of "pure" painting. Adequate exemplars from the beginning of "modern" painting in 1890, with Cézanne, van Gogh, Gauguin and Seurat, down to their descendants of 1935, are arranged in logical order. Not all the paintings in the show are the best work of the artists represented, since some sacrifices have been made in the interest of historical sequence of styles. Juan Gris, Picasso, Braque, Delaunay and Kandinsky receive the best treatment as individuals, but that may be because they are nearest the essential core of the whole fifty years of development.

To the beginner in looking at "abstract" painting this warning may be given: Don't try to find out what the picture "represents," because it seldom represents anything. Just look at it as you would a jewel, a football game or a sweetheart—for its own sake!

A PARTIAL BIBLIOGRAPHY

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17

Entartete Kunst
Degenerate Art

Munich, 1937

LOCATION AND DATES

Hofgarten-Arkaden Archäologischen Institut (Hofgarten Arcade of the Municipal Archaeological Institute), Galeriestrasse 4, Munich, 19 July–30 November 1937

ORGANIZER

Reichspropagandaleitung, Umtsleitung Kultur (Reich Ministry for National Enlightenment and Propaganda and Reich Chamber of Culture)

ITINERARY

Haus der Kunst, Berlin, 26 February–8 May 1938; Grassi-Museum, Leipzig, 13 May–6 June 1938; Kunstpalast, Düsseldorf, 18 June–7 August 1938; Festpielhaus, Salzburg, Austria, 4 September–2 October; Schulausstellungsgebaüde, Hamburg, 11 November–30 December 1938; Landeshaus, Szczecin, Poland, 11 January–5 February 1939; Landesmuseum, Weimar, Germany, 23 March–24 April 1939; Künstlerhaus, Vienna, 6 May–18 June 1939; Kunstausstellungshaus, Frankfurt am Main, 30 June–30 July 1939; Kaufmaünnisches Vereinshaus, Chemnitz, Germany, 11 August–10 September (closed on 26 August) 1939; Gebäude der Kreisleitung de NSDAP, Walbrzych, Poland, 18 January–2 February 1941; Landesanstalt für Volkheitskunde, Halle an der Saale, Germany, 5–20 April 1941

ARTISTS

Jankel Adler, Ernst Barlach, Rudolf Bauer, Philipp Bauknecht, Otto Baum, Willi Baumeister, Herbert Bayer, Max Beckmann, Rudolf Belling, Paul Bindel, Theo Brün, Max Burchartz, Fritz Burger-Mühlfeld, Paul Camenisch, Heinrich Campendonk, Karl Caspar, Maria Caspar-Filser, Pol Cassel, Marc Chagall, Lovis Corinth, Heinrich Davringhausen, Walter Dexel,

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EXHIBITION GUIDE

Entartete Kunst Ausstellungsführer (Degenerate Art Exhibition Guide). Introduction and guide to the exhibition by Fritz Kaiser. Berlin: Verlag für Kultur- und Wirtschaftswerbung (Publisher for Cultural and Economic Publicity), November 1937.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Number of artists: c. 112
Number of works: 600–700
Total attendance: c. 3.2 million (Munich, c. 2 million; Berlin, c. 500,000; Leipzig, c. 60,000; Düsseldorf, c. 150,000; Salzburg, c. 40,000; Hamburg, c. 136,000; Szczecin, c. 82,000; Weimar, c. 50,000; Vienna, c. 147,000; Frankfurt am Main, unknown [c. 40,000 by July 22]; Chemnitz, Walbrzych, Halle an der Saale, unknown)

The exhibition "Degenerate Art" was the climax of years of German antipathy to modernism of all forms. The groundwork had been laid by incendiary texts, from Carl Vinnen's 1911 pamphlet *A Protest of German Artists* (Ein Protest deutscher Künstler), arguing against the purchase of French paintings by German museums, to Paul Schultze-Naumburg's 1928 book *Art and Race* (Kunst und Rasse), with its images comparing Expressionist portraits to photographs of the mentally ill. By the 1930s Adolf Hitler's dictum that "art is a mission demanding fanaticism" was working itself out in reactionary practice, from the 1933 closing of the Bauhaus, the firing of liberal museum directors, and the reorganization of artistic activity under Joseph Goebbels's control, to the 1937 mass purging of modern artworks from state museums. The Führer—a failed painter himself—laid out the ideological ground in an hour-and-a-half speech at the 18 July 1937 opening of the first annual Great German Art Exhibition (Grosse deutsche Kunstausstellung), which, along with a pageant of six thousand costumed participants, inaugurated the first great architectural project of the Third Reich, the House of German Art (Haus der Deutschen Kunst).

The day after that opening, "Degenerate Art" went on display nearby. The culmination of four years of state-sponsored exhibitions linking modern art with social degeneracy and political subversion, the exhibition included more than 650 confiscated works by about 112 artists. In a cheerless irony, this anti–avant-garde show was the most well-attended avant-garde exhibition of the century, attracting more than two million people in Munich and a million more over the next four years as it toured cities in Germany, Austria, and Poland. Strewn with Nazi slogans and anti-Semitic captions—though only six of the artists were Jews—the exhibition identified the museum from which each work had been taken and the price originally paid, often in the highly inflated currency of the Weimar years.

In a departure from the planned destruction of all of the confiscated art, important works were sold on the international market for the hard currency so critical to the regime, most notably at an auction of 125 pieces in Lucerne on 30 June 1939. But, in a sad end to their long humiliation, close to five thousand works deemed unsalable had been incinerated by the Berlin fire department three months before the Lucerne auction.

→ Announcement for "Degenerate Art," Munich, 1937. The announcement begins with a list of inflammatory phrases describing the artists and their works, such as "Tormented Canvases," "Psychological Rejects," and "Insane Incompetents." The central paragraph reads: "awarded prizes by Jewish cliques, praised by writers, these products and producers of a so-called 'art' were acquired for national and regional public institutions at a time when German artists were starving. Just as the 'state' was, so was its 'art.'" This document was inserted into the catalog for the first annual Great German Art Exhibition, which opened in Munich the day before "Degenerate Art" with a ceremonial parade and pageant honoring two thousand years of German culture, and a lengthy speech by Adolf Hitler. (English transcription, p. 271.) No such pageantry accompanied "Degenerate Art," which was conceived as a counterpoint to the Great German Art Exhibition. It displayed more than 600 paintings, sculptures, graphic works, and books confiscated from 32 German public collections.

Gequälte Leinwand –
Seelische Verwesung –
Krankhafte Phantasten –
Geisteskranke Nichtskönner

von Judencliquen preisgekrönt, von Literaten gepriesen, waren Produkte und Produzenten einer „Kunst", für die Staatliche und Städtische Institute gemeinsames Millionenbeträge deutschen Volksvermögens verschleuderten, während deutsche Künstler zur gleichen Zeit verhungerten. So, wie jener „Staat" war seine „Kunst".

Seht Euch dies an! Urteilt selbst!

Besuchet die Ausstellung

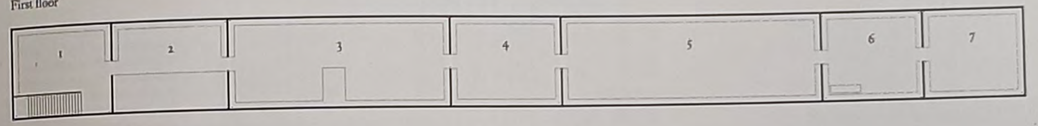
„Entartete Kunst"

Hofgarten-Arkaden, Galeriestraße 4

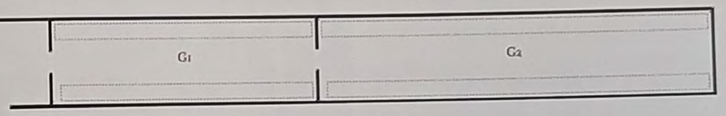
Eintritt frei Für Jugendliche verboten

↓ Crowd at the entrance to "Degenerate Art," Hofgarten Arcade, Municipal Archaeological Institute, Munich, 1937. The exhibition was installed not in a museum or gallery but rather in the cramped rooms of the Hofgarten, a building that housed the plaster cast collection of the Municipal Archaeological Institute. The banner on the exterior advertises free entrance, offered at the Munich venue by order of Hitler; an entrance fee was charged at the subsequent venues. The show attracted more than two million viewers in Munich.

First floor



Ground floor



† Floor plan, "Degenerate Art," Hofgarten Arcade, Munich. After ascending a staircase, visitors entered on the first floor, where the exhibition occupied seven rooms; it continued in two rooms on the ground floor. The works were installed less than three weeks after Hitler declared on 30 June 1937 that modern artwork created since 1910 and deemed offensive to the Third Reich be removed from state museums and collections. A team of five people led by Adolf Ziegler, president of the Reich Chamber of Visual Arts, toured state museums and collections and promptly confiscated nearly 700 works of art, shipping them to Munich for the exhibition. Ziegler also oversaw the installation, along with Wolfgang Willrich (author of the influential book *Cleansing of the Temple of Art*, 1937), and Walter Hansen.

→ Room 1 of the exhibition focused on Christian imagery. Arriving at the first room, visitors were confronted with a sculpture by Ludwig Gies, *Crucified Christ*, hanging against a red cloth. The show was loosely organized by thematic groupings, including sections devoted to the depiction of women, abstract art, and landscapes, among others. Wall text consisted of quotes by Hitler and Joseph Goebbels regarding cultural policy, combined with decontextualized quotes and sarcastic editorial commentary. Quotes from museum directors, artists, and critics, many originally published in avant-garde journals, were used to supposed ironic effect. The wall text at far left read in part: "Marvel! . . . The spiritual values . . . are so profound and individual that they would in themselves make the work one of the richest documents of modern religious experience. . . . It would be hard to find a symbol that would convey to posterity with greater power and depth the significance of the Great War and its fallen heroes."

↙↙ Room 1 included religious-themed paintings such as (top row, left to right) Emil Nolde's *Christ and the Sinning Woman* and two paintings by Max Beckmann: *Descent from the Cross* and *Christ and the Adulteress*. Below these were works by Paul Thalheimer and Nolde. Directly under Beckmann's *Christ and the Adulteress* was a red sticker that stated "paid for by the taxes of the German working people"; such stickers were posted throughout the rooms. The label below each work listed the artist's name, the title of the work, the museum from which it originated, the year of its acquisition, and in many instances, the price paid by the museum.

← Room 2 contained works solely by Jewish artists, who numbered 6 out of a total of approximately 112 artists in the exhibition. Included in the room were paintings by (clockwise from top left) Hanns Katz, Gert Wollheim, Ludwig Meidner, and Marc Chagall. A panel of text attached to the front of Meidner's painting was titled "Jewish, all too Jewish," and excerpted a quote by Meidner from the avant-garde journal *Das Kunstblatt*, 1929: "With a sense of humor and a practical talent for sycophancy, even a fascist rule can be borne quite well. I ask which of you is unshakably determined that his entire life should be marked by character, forthrightness, manly pride, and adherence to principle."

↙ Room 3 contained works from many movements of the avant-garde, including several pieces by Brücke artists. Burlap-covered partitions lined the walls of the seven galleries, allowing for uninterrupted hanging space and partially covering the windows. An excerpt from a speech by Goebbels was printed on the wall at left: "It is not possible to excuse past ideological aberrations of the gravest kind by dismissing them as the sins of youth... The responsibility for them lies not with the much-invoked *Zeitgeist* but with the artist himself, whose identity and name are behind the work." Paintings by Otto Müller, Max Pechstein, Karl Schmidt-Rottluff, Nolde, and Paul Camenisch, and a sculpture by Otto Freundlich were installed on the right-hand partition. Above the sculpture, the wall text stated (partial view): "The Jewish longing for the wilderness reveals itself—in Germany the negro becomes the racial ideal of a degenerate art."

→ On the opening day of the exhibition, 19 July 1937, Adolf Ziegler delivered an inaugural speech in Room 3. (English transcription, p. 274.) This room featured paintings by several Brücke artists, including Pechstein, Schmidt-Rottluff, and Nolde.

↘ In Room 3, at left, figural sculptures by Ernst Ludwig Kirchner (far left) and Christoph Voll (center left) flanked a painting by George Grosz, *Adventurer*. The extended label below Grosz's work read: "Announcement from the Galerie Neue Kunst and Goltz Publishing: One of George Gross's *[sic]* most important works has been acquired by the Stadtmuseum in Dresden. An astute museum director with a sure eye for new acquisitions has brought the Dresden city art collection to a high standard."

→→ One wall in Room 3 reproduced details from a painting by Wassily Kandinsky; the wall was ostensibly dedicated to the Dada art movement—one with which Kandinsky had never been associated. The wall text was a quote by George Grosz: "Take Dada seriously! It's worth it." This wall included two paintings by Kurt Schwitters (far left and center), a painting by Paul Klee (bottom), two issues of *Der Dada*, and a marble sculpture by Richard Haizmann placed directly on the floor. The text panel at center read: "'Kurt Schwitters's audacious paintings produce entirely new color harmonies, achieved through the objects themselves. There are velvety harmonies in this trash-can material that one never perceived before.' M. v. Wieder, *Cicero*, 1920." Below that: "'I favor nonsense, but that's a dangerous business. I feel sorry for nonsense because it has so rarely been accorded artistic form, and that is why I love nonsense.' Kurt Schwitters, 1924."

↘ On one of the walls in Room 3, the exclamation "They say it themselves!" appeared above the sinuous wall text that quoted an anarchist manifesto published in the left-wing journal *Die Aktion* in 1915: "We act as if we were painters, poets, or whatever, but what we are is simply and ecstatically impudent. In our impudence we take the world for a ride and train snobs to lick our boots!" Below the text is a group of sculptures by Rudolf Belling and Eugen Hoffmann, and paintings by Kandinsky, Lyonel Feininger, Nolde, Conrad Felixmüller, and Walter Dexel.

↗ Joseph Goebbels (foreground, left) and Hitler in Room 3 during a visit to "Degenerate Art." The text on the rear wall quoted a speech by Hitler that was delivered at a 1934 Nuremberg party rally. Sculptures by Rudolf Belling and paintings by Heinrich Campendonk, Paul Klee, and Conrad Felixmüller were installed on the adjacent wall (left).

→ Room 4 did not have a dominant theme and included less wall text than the other rooms, creating a less aggressively didactic gallery. Max Beckmann's *The Beach* occupied an entire partition (left). This room also contained works by Karl Hofer, Christian Rohlfs, Otto Lange, Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, Oskar Kokoschka, and Karl Schmidt-Rottluff.

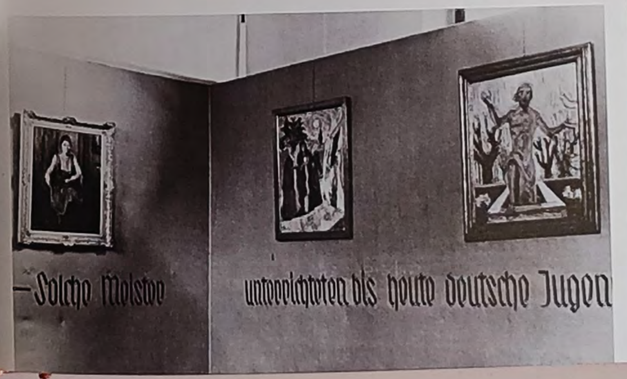
↘ In Room 5, the largest of the seven first-floor rooms, the exhibition returned to a more thematic display. A wall dedicated to abstract art bore the slogan "Insane at any price," and included Piet Mondrian's *Composition* (second from left) and a series of watercolors attributed to Wassily Kandinsky—although two were in fact by Klee. These were installed in a staggered format, and another two works by Kandinsky intended to hang horizontally were installed vertically. Throughout the exhibition, works were hung in a dense and chaotic fashion, in stark contrast to the Great German Art Exhibition where works were allotted ample white space. Many works in the exhibition lacked frames and identifying labels, or were incorrectly identified.

→ This wall in Room 5 displayed primarily abstract landscapes and cityscapes, including works by Schmidt-Rottluff, Kirchner, Otto Müller, Rohlfs, Emil Nolde, Beckmann, and Xaver Fuhr. The slogan at top read: "Even museum big shots called this the 'art of the German people.'"

↘ Lovis Corinth's *Ecce Homo* (second from left) and other paintings in Room 6 were installed under the heading "Decadence exploited for literary and commercial purposes." Works in this room had no identifying information except, in a few cases, the museum of origin. Franz Marc's *Tower of Blue Horses* (far right) was removed within days of the opening of the exhibition after a letter of objection from the German officers' federation revealed that Marc was a decorated World War I hero who had died in battle.

↘↘ Wilhelm Lehmbruck's *Kneeling Woman* was placed in Room 6; this work had been damaged in transit to Munich and was later removed from the exhibition. The text above the door reads: "They had four years' time," and refers to Hitler's decree, after taking power in 1933: "Now, people of Germany, give us just four years, and then judge us."

↓ Room 7 included works by academy professors, about whom the wall text declared, "Until yesterday such masters were still teaching our German youth." Above this declaration was a painting by Hans Purrmann, and two works by Karl Caspar, *Three Women at the Grave of Christ* (center) and *Resurrection, Easter* (right). Room 7 was closed to the public shortly after the show's inauguration in Munich, open thereafter only to VIPs and the press.



← The ground floor of the Hofgarten Arcade, which opened three days after the first floor, consisted of two barrel-vaulted rooms that contained more than half of the works exhibited in "Degenerate Art." Paintings, watercolors, portfolios of prints and woodcuts, photographs, and books were displayed on the walls and in existing glass vitrines in the first room (background) and second room (foreground).

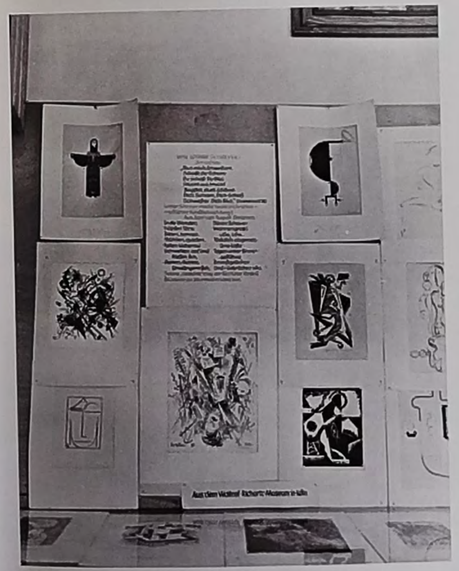
↓ Installed above the door at the end of the first room was a group of paintings identified only collectively by the wall text: "From the collection of the Stadt Museum in Dresden, Dr. P. F. Schmidt. This astute museum director with a sure eye for new acquisitions has in a short time brought the Dresden city art collection to a high standard. *Ararat*, 1920, p. 174." Among those confiscated from Dresden included works by Otto Dix, Otto Schubert, Erich Heckel, and Kirchner. Glass-covered vitrines lining the narrow rooms presented volumes from the publisher Reinhard Piper, Munich, and from the Junge Kunst series, Leipzig. Confiscated from the library of the Schlesisches Museum in Breslau, Junge Kunst was a series of books on artists such as Dix, Klee, Chagall, and Pechstein, among others.

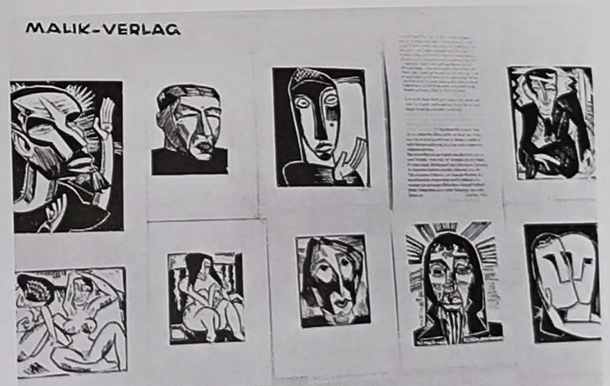
← Second room, ground floor, looking west.

↙ In the second room of the ground floor, frameless matted prints by Kandinsky, Lothar Schreyer, Alexej Jawlensky, Klee, Willi Baumeister, and others were tacked to the wall. In the center of this grouping was a text panel that included a poem by Schreyer with the commentary, "Lothar Schreyer dabbles in Christian mystical art appreciation!"

↓ Second room, ground floor, looking east.

↓↓ A series of nine woodcuts by Karl Schmidt-Rottluff was installed under the heading of Malik Verlag, a Berlin-based publisher of avant-garde artists' books, exhibition catalogs, Dada journals, and prints.





← Poster for "Degenerate Art," Haus der Kunst, Berlin, February–May 1938. The exhibition traveled to 12 venues over the course of four years—although 65 cities had requested the show—and Berlin was the first stop on the tour. The contents of the exhibition evolved as the show traveled from one venue to the next, with more valuable works removed and replaced by graphic works and pieces by local artists.

↙ Crowd at the entrance to "Degenerate Art," Haus der Kunst, Berlin. Above the title "Entartete Kunst" is the heading "Exhibition of NSDAP" (Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei) [National Socialist German Workers' Party] in Berlin." Approximately 500,000 people attended the Berlin show.

↙↙ Joseph Goebbels visiting the exhibition in Berlin. At far left is Nolde's *Christ and the Sinning Woman* (top) and *The Wise and Foolish Virgins* (bottom); at right is Gerhard Marcks's sculpture *St. George*.

↓ Visitors at "Degenerate Art," Berlin, 1938. Here the show's content and didactic wall texts were more focused on the political nature of degenerate works than they were in Munich, emphasizing the connection of degenerate artworks to their perceived Bolshevist agenda. The show also included a large section comparing degenerate works to those by the mentally ill.

↑ Ludwig Gies's *Crucified Christ* in Berlin.

↗ At the Haus der Kunst in Berlin, text was printed on hanging banners instead of directly on the walls. Here, the banner reads, "This is how the world was 'seen' by the degenerate art praised to the skies by the Jews and by hysterical babblers!" and "These were the 'masterpieces' that were paid for with the tax contributions of the working German people!!!" Included in this room are Eugen Hoffmann's sculpture *Female Nude* (far right) and Karl Schmidt-Rottluff's *Still Life* (directly behind the sculpture).

→ Pictured at the Berlin show are Jankel Adler's *Musicians* (second from left) and Marc Chagall's *Rabbi* (second from right). The wall text reads, "Incompetence and insolence were the characteristics of the pseudo-art praised by the Jews. Incompetence and insolence are the characteristics of the pseudo-confections concocted by the Jews. Incompetence and insolence are the characteristics of the Jewish race!"

So „sahen" sie die Welt,
Das waren die „Meisterwerke"
die „Meister" der von Juden und hysterischen Schwätzern in d
Himmel gerühmten Verfallskunst!
die mit den Steuergroschen des schaffenden deutschen Volk
bezahlt wurden !!!

Unfähigkeit und Frechheit waren die Merkmale der von Juden gepriesenen Afterkunst.
Unfähigkeit und Frechheit sind die Merkmale der von Juden fabrizierten Aftermachwerke.
Unfähigkeit und Frechheit sind die Merkmale der jüdischen Rasse !

↖ Poster for "Degenerate Art," Grassi-Museum, Leipzig, May–June 1938.

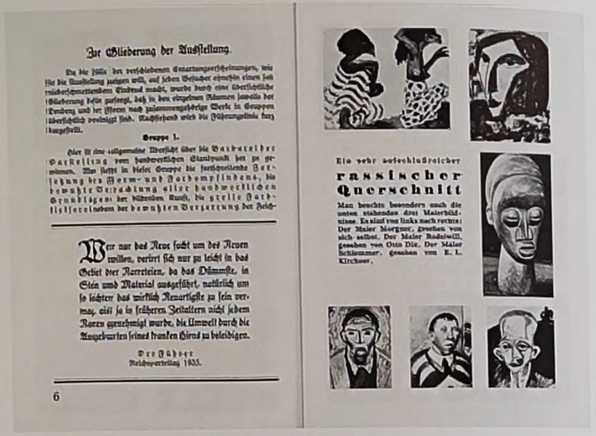
↑ Hartmut Pistauer (right, in suit), a member of the Reich's Stormtroopers (Sturmabteilung, or SA) and other Nazi officials toured the exhibition at the Kunstpalast, Düsseldorf, 1938. Eugen Hoffmann's sculpture, *Female Nude*, was included in this room (far right).

← Visitors lined up at the entrance to "Degenerate Art," Schulausstellungsgebäude, Hamburg, November–December 1938. Approximately 136,000 people attended the show in Hamburg.

→ Poster for "Degenerate Art," Künstlerhaus, Vienna, May–June 1939. Designed by Rudolf Herrmann, this poster also announces "Degenerate Music," a Nazi-organized exhibition of scores, stage designs, criticism, and other material by or about modernist composers and musicians such as Arnold Schönberg, Igor Stravinsky, Anton Webern, and Kurt Weill. The "Degenerate Music" exhibition merged with "Degenerate Art" in Weimar, and the two shows traveled together to Vienna, Frankfurt, and Chemnitz.

↓ Ticket to "Degenerate Art," Chemnitz, planned for August–September, but closed on 26 August 1939.

↑ Cover of the guide for *"Entartete 'Kunst,"* November 1937. The exhibition guide was not published in time for distribution at the Munich venue, but was available at subsequent locations. The cover features Otto Freundlich's *The New Man*, a plaster sculpture that was exhibited on the ground floor of the Munich Hofgarten Arcade. Authored by Fritz Kaiser (a member of the Reich propaganda directorate), the guide includes an introductory essay, "What the 'Degenerate Art' Exhibition Means to Do." (Translation, p. 275.) It also includes a section titled "The Arrangement of the Exhibition," which grouped the art into nine themes, such as religious and political works. Organizers used this section of the guide as a reference for installing the works at other venues.



Zur Gliederung der Ausstellung.

Da die Fülle der verschiedenen Entartungserscheinungen, wie sie die Ausstellung zeigen will, auf jeden Besucher abwechselnden einen teils verdeckenden, teils niederdrückenden Eindruck machte, wurde durch eine übersichtliche Gliederung dafür gesorgt, daß in den einzelnen Räumen sowohl der Inhalt, wie auch der Sinn nach zusammengehörige Werke in Gruppen übersichtlich vereinigt sind. Nachstehend wird die Führungslinie kurz dargestellt.

Gruppe 1.

Hier ist eine allgemeine Übersicht über die Entwicklung der Verfallskunst vom handwerklichen Standpunkt bei gegeben. Man stellt in dieser Gruppe die fortschreitende Zerstörung des Form- und Farbempfindens, die bewußte Verachtung aller handwerklichen Grundlagen, der bildenden Kunst, die grelle Farbfleckerei neben der bewußten Verzerrung der Zeichnung.

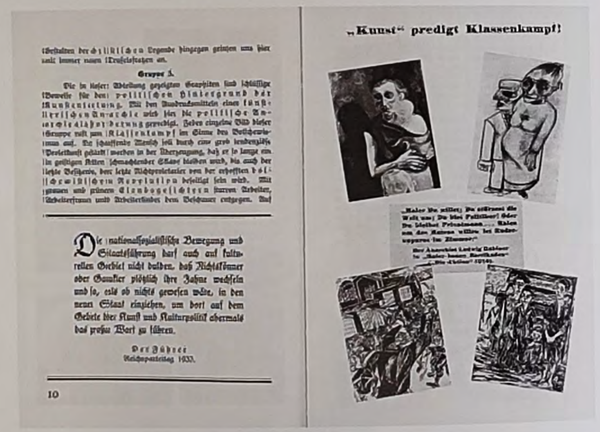
Wer nur das Herz hat um des Neuen willen, verliert sich nur zu leicht in das Gebiet der Narretein, da das Dämmerte, in Stein und Material ausgeführt, natürlich um so leichter das wirklich Neuartigste zu sein vermag, also ja in früheren Zeitaltern nicht jedem Narren gutmöglich wurde, die Umwelt durch die Ausgeburten seines kranken Hirns zu beleidigen.

Der Führer
Reichsparteitag 1933.

6

Ein sehr aufschlußreicher
rassischer
Querschnitt

Man beachte besonders auch die unten stehenden drei Malerbildnisse. Es sind von links nach rechts: Der Maler Morgner, gemalt von sich selbst. Der Maler Rodewill, gemalen von Otto Dix. Der Maler Schlemmer, gemalen von E. L. Kirchner.



Verhältnis der politischen Gegner hingegen genügen uns hier stets immer neuen Ungeheuerlichkeiten.

Gruppe 3.

Die in dieser Abteilung gezeigten Gemälden sind schädliche Beweise für den politischen Hintergrund der Kunstentartung. Mit den Bundesmitteln einer künstlerischen Anarchie weist hier die politische Anarchie Verhöhnung gezeigt. Jedes einzelne Bild dieser Gruppe redet zum Klassenkampf im Sinne des Bolschewismus und die schaffende Mensch soll durch eine grob tendenziöse Verlogenheit gelehrt werden in der Überzeugung, daß er so lange ein in geistigen Rätsel schwachsinniger Affäre bleiben wird, bis auch der letzte Besitzende, der letzte Nichtproletarier von der offenen bolschewistischen Revolution befreiligt sein wird. Mit grauen und grünen Gesichtern starren Idealist, Intellektuellen und Arbeiterführer den Betrachter entgegen. Und

Die nationalsozialistische Bewegung und Staatsführung darf auch auf kulturellen Gebiet nicht dulden, daß Nichtskönner oder Gauner plötzlich ihre Jahne wechseln und so, als ob nichts gewesen wäre, in den neuen Staat einziehen, um dort auf dem Gebiete der Kunst und Kulturpolitik abermals das große Wort zu führen.

Der Führer
Reichsparteitag 1933.

10

↗ Group one, described on the top of the left page, includes artwork that "affords an overall view of the barbarism of representation from the point of view of technique." The bottom half of the page consists of a quote from Hitler from the Reich Party Congress, 1933. The right page illustrates works by (clockwise from top left) Emil Nolde, Karl Schmidt-Rottluff (two works), Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, Otto Dix, and Wilhelm Morgner. Commentary that begins "A Highly Revealing Racial Cross Section" accompanies the works. (Translation, p. 275.) Not all the artworks reproduced in the guide were exhibited; however, they were all by artists who participated in at least one venue of the show.

↑ Group three, described on the top of the left page, begins, "The graphic works in this exhibition are conclusive proof of the *political basis of Degenerate Art*." Another quote by Hitler, also from the Reich Party Congress of 1933, is included on the bottom half of the page. (Translation, p. 276.) Under the heading "'Art' Preaches Class Struggle!" are works by (clockwise from top left) Hans Grundig, Dix, Christoph Voll, and Conrad Felixmüller.

Inaugural speech of the Great German Art Exhibition [excerpt]
ADOLF HITLER
Haus der Deutschen Kunst, Munich,
18 July 1937

When, four years ago, the solemn ceremony of laying the cornerstone for this building took place, we were all conscious of the fact that not only the stone for a new building must be laid but the foundation for a new and true German art. At stake was our chance to provoke a turning-point in the development of the total German cultural output. . . .

Germany's collapse and general decline had been—as we know—not only economic or political, but probably even to a much greater extent, cultural. Moreover, this process could not be explained exclusively on the grounds of the lost war. Such catastrophes have very often afflicted peoples and states, only to provide an impetus to their purification and give rise to an inner elevation. However, that flood of slime and ordure which the year 1918 belched forth into our lives was not a product of the lost war, but was only freed in its rush to the surface by that calamity. Through the defeat, an already thoroughly diseased body of the social, economic, and cultural patterns which continued to function in appearance only, the baseness already underlying them for a long time, triumphed, and indeed this was so in all strata of our life.

It is obvious that, due to its nature, the economic decline was felt most strongly, since the masses always become most urgently conscious of these conditions. In comparison to this economic decline, the political collapse was either flatly denied or at least not recognized by a great number of Germans, while the cultural collapse was neither seen nor understood by the vast majority of our people. . . .

To begin with:

1. The circle of those who are consciously occupied with cultural matters is by nature not nearly as large as the number of those who have to deal with economic matters.

2. On these cultural grounds, more than on any others, Judaism had taken possession of those means and institutions of communication which form, and thus finally rule over public opinion. Judaism was very clever indeed, especially in employing its position in the press with the help of

↓ Cover, *Hamburger Anzeiger*, 25 September 1937. The cover of this illustrated supplement shows viewers in Room 3 of "Degenerate Art" in Munich. The caption (bottom left) reads: "Two worlds: Women from Bückeburg in front of degenerate art."

Nr. 39/1937 — Sonnabend, den 25. September

Hamburger Anzeiger

Illustrierte Beilage

Zwei Welten:
Bückeburgerinnen vor entarteter Kunst.

Kirchners „Paar": das hier die eine Bäuerin mit Verwunderung und die andere mit Lächeln ablehnt, wurde 1930 von einer deutschen Kunsthalle für 3000 M. angekauft.

so-called art criticism and succeeding not only in confusing the nature and scope of art as well as its goals, but above all in undermining and destroying the general wholesome feeling in this domain. . . .

Art, on the one hand, was defined as nothing but an intentional communal experience, thus killing altogether any understanding of its integral relationship with an ethnic group. On the other hand its relationship to time was stressed, that is: There was no longer any art of peoples or even races, but only an art of the times. According to this theory, therefore, Greek art was not formed by the Greeks, but by a certain period which formed it as their expression. The same, naturally, was true of Roman art, which, for the same reasons, coincided only by accident with the rise of the Roman empire. Again in the same way the more recent art epochs of humanity have not been created by the Arabs, Germans, Italians, French, etc., but are only appearances conditioned by time. Therefore today no German or French or Japanese or Chinese art exists, but plainly and simply only a "modern art." Consequently, art as such is not only completely isolated from its ethnic origins, but it is the expression of a certain vintage which is characterized today by the word "modern," and thus, of course, will be un-modern tomorrow, since it will be outdated.

According to such a theory, as a matter of fact, art and art activities are lumped together with the handiwork of our modern tailor shops and fashion industries. And to be sure, following the maxim: Every year something new. One day Impressionism, then Futurism, Cubism, maybe even Dadaism etc. A further result is that even for the most insane and inane monstrosities thousands of catchwords to label them will have to be found, and have indeed been found. If it weren't so sad in one sense, it would almost be a lot of fun to list all the slogans and clichés with which the so-called "art initiates" have described and explained their wretched products in recent years. . . .

Until the moment when National-Socialism took power, there existed in Germany a so-called "modern art," that is, to be sure, almost every year another one, as the very meaning of this word indicates. National-Socialist Germany, however, wants again a "German Art," and this art shall and will be of eternal value, as are all truly creative values of a people. Should this art, however, again lack this eternal value for our people, then indeed it will mean that it also has no higher value today.

When, therefore, the cornerstone of this building was laid, it was with the intention of constructing a temple, not for a so-called modern art, but for a true and everlasting German art, that is, better still, a House for the art of the German people, and not for any international art of the year 1937, '40, '50 or '60. For art is not founded on time, but only on peoples. It is therefore imperative for the artist to erect a monument, not so much to a period, but to his people. For time is changeable, years come and go. Anything born of and thriving on a certain epoch alone, would perish with it. And not only all which had been created before us would fall victim to this mortality, but also what is being created today or will be created in the future.

But we National-Socialists know only one mortality, and that is the mortality of the people itself. Its causes are known to us. As long as a people exists, however, it is the fixed pole in the flight of fleeting appearances. It is being amd the lasting permanence. And, indeed, for this reason, art as an expression of the essence of this being, is an eternal monument—in itself the being and the permanence. . . .

From the history of the development of our people we know that it is composed of a number of more or less differentiated races, which in the course of milleniums, thanks to the overwhelming formative influence of one outstanding racial core, resulted in that particular mixture which we see in our people today.

This power, once capable of forming a people, and thus still today an active one, is contained here again in the same Aryan race which we recognize not only as the carrier of our own culture, but as that of the preceding cultures of antiquity as well.

This particular type of composition of our national heritage conditions the versatility of our own cultural development just as much as it does the resulting natural kinship with those peoples and cultures of the same homogeneous racial core in other European countries of the same family of peoples.

Nevertheless, we who see in the German people the gradually crystallizing end result of this historical process, desire for ourselves an art which takes into account within itself the continually growing unification of this race pattern and, thus, emerges with a unified, well-rounded total character.

The question has often been asked: What does it really mean to be German? Among all those definitions which through the centuries have been suggested by many men, the most valuable one for me seems to be that one which from the start does not even try to give an explanation, but which rather sets up a law. And the most beautiful law which I can envisage for my people as the task set for its life in this world, a great German has already long ago put into words: "To be German is to be clear." This, moreover, implies that to be German means to be logical and also, above all, to be true. . . .

Now, this deep inner longing for such a true German art which carries within it the traits of this law of clarity has always been alive in our people. It occupied our great painters, our sculptors, the formers of our architecture, our thinkers and poets, and probably to the highest degree, our musicians. When on that fateful 6th of June in 1913 the old *Glaspalast* burnt down in that horrible fire, an immortal treasure of such true German art went up in flames. They were called the Romantics, but in essence they were the most glorious representatives of those noble Germans in search of the true intrinsic virtue of our people and the honest and respectable expression of those only inwardly experienced laws of life. Yet it was not only the chosen subject matter that was decisive for the characterization of the German substance, but just as important was the clear and simple manner in which these feelings were represented. . . .

Art can in no way be a fashion. As little as the character and the blood of our people will change, so much will art have to lose its mortal character and replace it with worthy images expressing the life-course of our people in the steadily unfolding growth of its creations. Cubism, Dadaism, Futurism, Impressionism, etc., have nothing to do with our German people. For these concepts are neither old nor modern, but are only artifactitious stammerings of men to whom God has denied the grace of a truly artistic talent, and in its place has awarded them the gift of jabbering or deception. I will therefore confess now, in this very hour, that I have come to the final inalterable decision to clean house, just as I have done in the domain of political confusion, and from now on rid the German art life of its phrase-mongering.

"Works of art" which cannot be understood in themselves but, for the justification of their existence, need those bombastic instructions for their use, finally reaching that intimidated soul, who is patiently willing to accept such stupid or impertinent nonsense—these works of art from now on will no longer find their way to the German people.

All those catchwords: "inner experience," "strong state of mind," "forceful will," "emotions pregnant with the future," "heroic attitude," "meaningful empathy," "experienced order of the times," "original primitivism," etc.—all these dumb, mendacious excuses, this claptrap or jabbering will no longer be accepted as excuses or even recommendations for worthless, integrally unskilled products. *Whether or not anybody has a strong will or an inner experience, he will have to prove through his work, and not through gibberish. And anyhow, we are all much more interested in quality than in the so-called will. . . .*

I have observed among the pictures submitted here, quite a few paintings which make one actually come to the conclusion that the eye shows things differently to certain human beings than the way they really are, that is, that there really are men who see the present population of our nation only as rotten cretins; who, on principle, see meadows blue, skies green, clouds sulphur yellow, and so on, or, as they say, experience them as such. I do not want to enter into an argument here about the question of whether the persons concerned really do or do not see or feel in such a way; but, in the name of the German people, I want to forbid these pitiful misfortunes who quite obviously suffer from an eye disease, to try vehemently to foist these products of their misinterpretation upon the age we live in, or even to wish to present them as "Art."

No, here there are only two possibilities: Either these so-called "artists" really see things this way and therefore believe in what they depict; then we would have to examine their eyesight-deformation to see if it is the product of a mechanical failure or of inheritance. In the first case, these unfortunates can only be pitied; in the second case, they would be the object of great interest to the Ministry of Interior of the Reich which would then have to take up the question of whether further inheritance of such gruesome malfunctioning of the eyes cannot at least be checked. If, on the other hand, they themselves do not believe in the reality of such impressions but try to harass the nation with this humbug for other reasons, then such an attempt falls within the jurisdiction of the penal law.

This House, in any case, has neither been planned, nor was it built for the works of this kind of incompetent or art criminal. . . .

But far more important is the fact that the labor performed here on this spot for four and a half years, the maximum achievements demanded here of thousands of workers, were not intended to serve the purpose of exhibiting the production of men who, to top it off, were lazy enough to dirty a canvas with color droppings in the firm hope that, through the daring advertisement of their products as the lightning birth of genius, they could not fail to produce the needed impression and qualifications for their acceptance. No, I say. The diligence of the builder of this House and the diligence of his collaborators must be equaled by the diligence of those who want to be represented in this House. Beyond this, I am not the least bit interested in whether or not these "also-rans" of the art world will cackle among themselves about the eggs they have laid, thereby giving to each other their expert opinion.

For the artist does not create for the artist, but just like every one else he creates for the people.

And we will see to it that from now on the people will once again be called upon to be the judges of their own art. . . .

I do not want anybody to have false illusions: National-Socialism has made it its primary task to rid the German Reich, and thus, the German people and its life of all those influences which are fatal and ruinous to its existence. And although this purge cannot be accomplished in one day, I do not want to leave the shadow of a doubt as to the fact that sooner or later the hour of liquidation will strike for those phenomena which have participated in this corruption.

But with the opening of this exhibition the end of German art foolishness and the end of the destruction of its culture will have begun.

From now on we will wage an unrelenting war of purification against the last elements of putrefaction in our culture. However, should there be someone among those elements who still believes that he is destined to higher ranks, then he has had ample time in these four years to prove it. For us, in any case, these four years are long enough to reach a final judgment. From now on—I assure you—all those cliques of babblers, dilettantes and art crooks which lend support to each other and are therefore able to survive, will be eliminated and abolished. For our sake those prehistoric stone-age culture-vultures and art stammerers may just as well as retreat to the caves of their ancestors to adorn them with their primitive international scribblings.

But the House for German Art in Munich has been built by the German people for their own German art.

To my great pleasure, I am able to state that now already, besides the many decent older artists, who have until now lived in terror and were suppressed, but, who deep in their souls had always remained German, a number of new youthful masters are presenting themselves. A walk through this exhibition will allow you to find quite a few things that will impress you as beautiful and, above all, as decent, and which you will sense to be good. Particularly the level of the graphic art submitted was on the average from the very beginning extremely high and thus satisfying.

Many of our young artists will now recognize in what is being offered them which road they should take; but perhaps they will also gain a new impetus from the greatness of the times in which we all live, and from which we take courage and, above all, retain the courage to produce a really diligent and, thus, in the final run, competent work.

And when once again in this realm of art the holy conscientiousness will have regained its full rights, then, I have no doubt, the almighty will elevate a few from this multitude of decent creators of art into the starry skies of the immortal, divinely inspired artists of the great past. For we do not believe that with the great men of the centuries gone by, the time for the creative power of a few blessed men has come to an end, nor that the creative power of a collective broad mass will take its place in the future. No! We believe that especially today, when in so many realms the highest achievements are being accomplished, that also in the realm of art the highest value of personality as an individual will make a triumphant reappearance.

I can therefore express no other wish at this moment than that the new house be privileged to reveal again to the German people a large number of works by great artists in these halls during the coming centuries, and thus contribute not only to the glory of this true city of art, but also to the honor and prestige of the entire German nation.

I herewith declare the great exhibition of German art 1937 in Munich opened!

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Originally published as "Der Führer eröffnet die Grosse Deutsche Kunstausstellung 1937," in Die Kunst im Dritten Reich *I, no 7–8 (July–August 1937): 46–61. From Herschel B. Chipp, ed., Theories of Modern Art: A Sourcebook by Artists and Critics (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968), 474–82. Translation by Ilse Falk.*

Inaugural speech of "Degenerate Art"

ADOLF ZIEGLER

Hofgarten Arcade, Munich, 19 July 1937

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We are all still deeply impressed by the great festivities in Munich marking the inauguration of the House of German Art. Everything that the masters of our own day have created in terms of values and works of fine art is now offered to the people in this unparalleled display in the splendid new temple of German art. However, before we German artists and national comrades leave Munich after these festive days, we have one more duty to perform, and it is a sad one: namely, to make clear to the German people that, until not very long ago, the production of artwork was under the sway of certain forces that did not see art as a natural and a clear expression of life. Rather, they consciously eschewed all that was healthy, cultivating everything that was sick and degenerate, and valuing this as the peak of what the artist could achieve.

We were, however, overjoyed to learn, from the words spoken yesterday by our Führer, that a definitive end has now been put to this sort of activity. This also means an end for those who once championed this so-called art of decline and degeneracy, who abused their own influence as writers in an attempt to trick the German people into believing a lie: that the art being offered by like-minded dealers for commercial gain was the most modern, and altogether the greatest, achievement.

We are now standing in an exhibition which contains only a fraction of the material from all over Germany that a great many museums once acquired, using public funds (the savings of the German people), and then exhibited as "art." Around us you see those monstrous products of madness, insolence, incapacity and degeneracy. What is presented in this show provokes in all of us a sense of shock and a feeling of disgust. Many directors of great museums evinced not the slightest trace of a feeling of responsibility toward the people and the state—surely the first requirement in those charged with creating public displays of art. In the present exhibition, I have used a series of examples to illustrate the penchant of these museum directors for exhibiting only that which was sick and degenerate. Artists whose work was rejected while they were healthy and working in response to the inspiration of their native soil suddenly became desirable for the diseased and incomprehensible drubs they produced after they had suffered a second stroke. And so, I have also gathered in this exhibition the work produced by artists in their old age, or in a period of intellectual decline, or even when they had succumbed to a sort of dementia, works that were, until very recently, on public display in our museums while one would have looked in vain there for healthy work by the same artists. In this way, painting became an end in itself for those museum directors responsible for collecting it for their institutions; and the resulting collections ceased to serve the interests of the people.

In the process of fulfilling the task with which I have been charged—that of fully documenting the decline and degeneracy of art—I have visited almost all the museums in Germany. It was clear to me that the number of works acquired in recent years must be enormous. I was astonished beyond measure to discover that, up until a few days ago, some of this evidence of decline, which has now been brought to Munich, was still being exhibited in public museums and collections in Germany and thus, with their implicit approval, set before the German people. What we have put on display here is, however, only a segment of what was to be found in the aforementioned institutions. There would simply not have been enough trains available to remove all of this trash from the German museums. This has yet to happen, and we hope to accomplish it as soon as possible. It is a sin and a disgrace that these institutions were hung with this stuff while local artists and other living German artists were barely given the chance, or were given very little chance, to show their work in these places.

I will here refrain from informing you in detail of my impressions as I came across these works. I hope, however, that your feelings, as you make a tour of the present exhibition, will be much the same as mine were.

No one who served at the Front during the Great War can help but feel horrified when discovering how, in some of these works, our veterans are spat upon and defiled or, in others, how these swine insultingly present the figure of the German mother as little better than a lascivious prostitute or a sort of whorish female archetype, or give her a facial expression of utter imbecility. And what must he think on learning that—at a time when the center of power resided in the government—public collections were permitted to buy so-called works of art that poked fun at Christian symbols in a way that defies description. All in all, it would be more than fair to say that whatever was sacred to the upstanding German, had now of necessity to be trampled underfoot. I do not have time now, my German national comrades, to present to you everything that these fellows permitted themselves in the way of criminal acts as the effective servants of, and trendsetters for, international Jewry. The basest and meanest deeds became their ideal of beauty. By the same token, important posts were granted to those who were prepared to declare: "We can never destroy enough culture for the sake of culture. We can never destroy enough works of art for the sake of art. Let us have done with respect for this thoroughly bourgeois culture. Let us knock down the old idols in the name of the coming proletarian culture. Let us set fire to the libraries. Let us reroute the canals so as to flood the museums. Let all those glorious pictures simply float away."

And what those literati invoked in their writings, my German national comrades, shall now come to pass. We shall throw out their old idols, in so far as these have not already been thrown out. We shall make clear to these gentlemen that, even in the field of the fine arts, the time has passed when advocates of the old ways could happily commit themselves to the guiding principle: "We prefer to exist in an unclean form rather than perish as 'clean.' We leave it to pig-headed individualists and old maids to be impotent yet upright. We will not be intimidated by the longing for a good reputation."

In the past, before the seizure of power, while the German worker was struggling to survive on a wretched unemployment benefit, unheard-of sums of taxpayers' money were being paid by Jewish helots for a so-called art that did nothing but mock the people and rob it of its national honor and its international dignity. In the future, true artists will be grateful to their German national comrades. For when the art Bolsheviks wanted to foist their daubs on the supposedly class-conscious workers, the latter responded not as workers, but as Germans in every respect. They simply rejected the fraud. They shook their heads in incomprehension when articles in their old party newspapers resorted to claptrap and clichés in praise of these products. Given that no right-thinking, normal person could understand anything of these forms of expression that you see here all around you, these were then promoted as art intended for the supposedly "educated" person. One especially regrettable feature of the earlier bourgeois period was that a great many of our German national comrades were persuaded that it looked good, when they had a bit too much money in their pockets, to buy something of this sort, so that *they, too,* could be modern.

We know that it is not the deceived, but the deceivers, who must now be held accountable. But note that the reckoning takes place not on the occasion of the seizure of power, but four years after that event. We have all had four years in which to adapt as required. But our patience is now exhausted regarding those who, during the past four years of National Socialist reconstruction in the field of the fine arts, have not got into line. It is now time for the German people to have their say, and we do not need to shy away from their judgment. As in every aspect of our lives, the German people understand that they can have wholehearted faith in the man who is today their Führer, and they know what path German art must now take if it is to fulfill its great task as the witness to what it means to be truly German. I hereby declare the exhibition "Degenerate Art" open to the public. Come, Germans, and decide for yourselves!

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Original German text from Peter-Klaus Schuster, ed., Nationalsozialismus und "Entartete Kunst": Die "Kunststadt" München 1937 (Munich: Prestel Verlag, 1988), 217–18.

Entartete Kunst Ausstellungsführer [exh. guide]

"Was Will die Ausstellung 'Entartete Kunst?'"

FRITZ KAISER

Berlin, 1937

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It means to give, at the outset of a new age for the German people, a firsthand survey of the gruesome last chapter of those decades of cultural decadence that preceded the great change.

It means to appeal to the sound judgment of the people and thus to put an end to the drivel and claptrap of all those literary cliques and hangers-on, many of whom would still try to deny that we ever had such a thing as artistic degeneracy.

It means to make it clear that this degeneracy in art was something more than the sort of short-lived foolishness, idiocy, and rash experimentation that might have spent itself and died even without the National Socialist revolution.

It means to show that this was no "necessary ferment," but a deliberate and calculated onslaught upon the very essence and survival of art itself.

It means to expose the common roots of *political* anarchy and *cultural* anarchy and to unmask degenerate art as *art-Bolshevism* in every sense of the term.

It means to reveal the philosophical, political, racial, and moral goals and purposes pursued by those who promoted subversion.

It means to show, too, how these symptoms of degeneracy spread from the deliberate troublemakers to infect those more or less unwitting acolytes who, in spite of *previous*—and in some cases also subsequent—evidence of artistic talent, were so lacking in *scruple, character,* or *common sense* as to join in the general Jewish and Bolshevik furor.

It means to reveal in this way the true peril of a trend that, steered by a few Jewish and openly Bolshevik ringleaders, could succeed in enlisting such individuals to work toward Bolshevik anarchy in *cultural politics* when those same individuals might well have indignantly denied any affiliation with Bolshevism in *party politics.*

It means to prove above all that *none* of the men who were in any way involved in the degeneracy of art can now turn around and talk about "harmless follies of youth."

From all this emerges, finally, what the "Degenerate Art" exhibition does *not* mean to do:

It does not mean to assert that *all* the names that are emblazoned on the botched efforts shown here also appeared in the membership lists of the *Communist party.* As *no* such assertion is made, *no refutation* is called for.

It does not mean to deny that the one or another of those shown here has at some time—before or since—"achieved something different." It is not the business of this exhibition, however, to gloss over the fact that in the years of major Bolshevik-Jewish onslaught upon German art such men stood on the side of subversion.

It does not mean to prevent those artists shown who are of German blood—and who have not followed their former Jewish friends abroad—from now *honestly striving* and *fighting* for the basis of a new and healthy creativity. It *does* and *must* mean to prevent, however, the jabbering cliques from that murky past from foisting any such men on the new state and on its forward-looking people as "the natural standard-bearers of an art of the Third Reich."

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"What the 'Degenerate Art' Exhibition Means to Do," in Stephanie Barron, ed., "Degenerate Art": The Fate of the Avant-Garde in Nazi Germany (Los Angeles: Los Angeles County Museum of Art; New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1991), 360–63. Translation by David Britt.

"Zur Gliederung der Ausstellung"

[excerpt]

FRITZ KAISER

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[p. 6 of exh. guide]

The sheer diversity of the manifestations of degeneracy, as the exhibition seeks to show them, is such as to stun and bewilder any visitor, so a clear organizational principle has been adopted whereby the works in each room are classified by tendency and form into a number of groups. A brief guide to the exhibition follows, treating the groups in recommended sequence.

GROUP I

This affords an overall view of the *barbarism of representation* from the point of view of technique. This group exemplifies the progressive *collapse of sensitivity to form and color,* the *conscious disregard for the basics of technique* that underlie the fine art, the *garish spattering of color,* the *deliberate distortion* of the drawing, and the total *stupidity*. . .

Anyone who pursues the new for its own sake strays all too easily into the realm of folly. Of course, the more stupid a thing made from stone and materials, the more likely it is to be something really new, because earlier ages did not allow every fool to insult his contemporaries with the abortions of his sick brain.

The Führer

Reich Party Congress 1933.

[p. 7 of exh. guide]

A HIGHLY REVEALING RACIAL CROSS SECTION

Note also, in particular, the three portraits of painters shown below. They are, from left to right: the painter Morgner as seen by himself, the painter Radzivill as seen by Otto Dix, the painter Schlemmer as seen by E. L. Kirchner.

[p. 10 of exh. guide]

. . . *Testament legends* are *not to be* found. The figures of *Christian* legend, on the other hand, leer out at us in a constant succession of devilish masks.

GROUP 3

The graphic works shown in this exhibition are conclusive proof of the *political basis of degenerate art*. The methods of *artistic anarchy* are used to convey *an incitement to political anarchy*. Every single image in this group is an incitement to *class struggle* in the Bolshevik sense. The idea is to convince every productive person, by means of a crudely tendentious proletarian art, that he will remain a slave and languish in mental chains until the last property owner, the last non-proletarian has been swept away by the longed-for *Bolshevik revolution*. Workers, their wives and their children stare out at the reviewer with *faces of utter misery* in shades of gray and green. "Capitalists" and . . .

In the field of culture, as elsewhere, the National Socialist movement and government must not permit incompetents and charlatans suddenly to change sides and enlist under the banner of the new state as if nothing had happened, so they can once again call all the shots in art and cultural policy.

The Führer

Reich Party Congress 1933.

[p. 11 of exh. guide]

"ART" PREACHES CLASS STRUGGLE!

"Painter, you desire, you overturn the world, you are a politician! Or else you remain a private man . . . . Painting for painting's sake is like having a rowing machine in your bedroom.'"

The anarchist Ludwig Rubiner in 'Painters Build Barricades' ("Action" 1914).

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"The Arrangement of the Exhibition," in Stephanie Barron, ed., "Degenerate Art": The Fate of the Avant-Garde in Nazi Germany (Los Angeles: Los Angeles County Museum of Art; New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1991), 364–65; 368–69. Translation by David Britt.

An account of "Degenerate Art," 21 and 22 July 1937, Munich

PAUL ORTWIN RAVE

Journal entry – Berlin, 23 July 1937

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The exhibition, formally opened on the morning of 19 July by Professor Ziegler, is housed in the rooms of the Plaster Cast Collection of the Department of Archaeology in the so-called Gallery Building in the Hofgarten Arcades. In the relatively narrow rooms, thin upright panels covered in burlap have been erected along the pre-existing walls, serving as a support for the pictures and accompanying inscriptions. The hang is relatively cluttered, usually with pictures in two rows. The windows located directly above them and the general restriction of the spaces make it difficult to look at properly. There was a constant crush: according to reports in the Munich press, there were 30,000 visitors to the exhibition on 21 July (while at the House of German Art there were said to have been 6,000). The thickly pressed crowds of people were almost without exception silent, and many were seen making notes. A few visitors, mostly older gentlemen, shook their heads or uttered slight sounds of astonishment. There were a great many young people. Had they been older and much more circumspect, they might have discussed this event quietly among themselves; but, as it was, they mainly gazed around in the greatest bewilderment, occasionally bursting into uncomprehending laughter when confronted with the more crude examples, which seemed to them to have come down from the mountains. Children, too, were spotted among the crowd, even though the exhibition had been explicitly advertised as "forbidden for minors," as noted on the enclosed handbill (the handbill inserted in the catalog of the exhibition at the House of German Art).

The highest degree of astonishment, be it as reflected in visitors' faces, or in their comments and conversations, was detectable in front of the wall with the many paintings by Lovis Corinth, which were on the whole readily recognized as his work, even though the name "Corinth," as was very evident, had recently been removed from the captions.

It appears that the propagandistic aim of the exhibition was most effectively and rapidly achieved through the numerous inscriptions. The individual rooms or wall sections bore slogans, inscribed in large lettering, to indicate the organizational principles of the display, and certain individual art works were also given their own slogans. In the first room, for example, the principal slogan read: "Under the rule of the center an insolent mocking of the life of Christ." Displayed here were chiefly paintings by Nolde, among them the large, nine-part altarpiece (from Essen), the Crucifixion by Gies with a eulogy (inanely exaggerated) from Carl Georg Heise. From the National Gallery there was only *Christ and the Sinning Woman* [Christus und die Sünderin]. Where, as was usually the case, the price paid for a work was noted, a large red label was added, bearing the words: "Paid for out of the tax contributions of the German people."

In the next few rooms works from the National Gallery were to be found under the following slogans: "Dada": Campendonk's *Leaping Horse* [Springendes Pferd], Nolde's *Masks* [Masken], Kandinsky's *Two Sorts of Red* [Zweierlei Rot] and *Rest* [Ruhe], a small picture by Feininger called *Teltow* (which does not, however, belong to the National Gallery), and also the sculptural works *Head in Brass* [Messingkopf] and *Triad* [Dreiklang] by Belling, *Head of a Girl* [Mädchenkopf] by Baum, and *The Self* [Das Ich] by Herzog (this last noted only as "Berlin 1918," without further details—Herzog being a Party member).

Representing the "Jewish desire for dissipation" were four pictures by Otto Müller, among them *The Tent* [Das Zelt] from the National Gallery and *Four Nudes* [Vier Akte], allegedly from the National Gallery.

As an illustration of "German peasants—as seen by the Jews" there were pictures by Pechstein, among them *The Fisherman's Family* [Fischerfamilie], allegedly from the National Gallery.

Under "Ideals: The cretin and the whore" one found Pechstein's *The Artist's Wife* [Frau des Künstlers], *Carnival* [Fastnacht] (in fact, *Carnival in Paris* [Pariser Fastnacht]!) by Beckmann, *Circus Equestrienne* [Zirkusreiterin] by Kleinschmidt, and two pictures of nudes by Otto Müller—these, too, allegedly from the National Gallery.

The notion of the "Mockery of German womanhood" was epitomized by Hofer's *Seated Nude* [Sitzender Akt], allegedly from the National Gallery. (As in the aforementioned works "allegedly from the National Gallery," this had in fact been seized by the Secret Police and merely placed there for safe-keeping.)

In the next room, which had no slogan, there were two works from the National Gallery: two pictures by Kirchner: *Street* [Strasse] and *Masters of Die Brücke* [Meister der Brücke].

Under the slogan: "Even museum big shots called this the art of the German people" there were four pictures from the National Gallery: three works by Otto Müller in addition to Xaver Fuhr's *Café Garden* [Cafégarten].

From the National Gallery, under the slogan "This is how diseased minds saw nature," were Kirchner's *View of Tobel* [Blick ins Tobel] (on loan from the Ministry of the Interior), three pictures by Schmidt-Rottluff, Pechstein's *Lake in Stormy Weather* [Stürmische See], Feininger's *Teltow*, a *Still Life* [Stilleben] by Moll, and *Fishing Boats* [Fischerboote] by Nagel.

Items from the National Gallery under the slogan "Insane at any price" were Baumeister's *Three Mechanics* [Drei Monteure], and *In the Canoe* [Im Kano] by Metzinger (French).

In this room, as in the next, penultimate one, the chief slogan, placed above the doors, read: "They had four years' time." Then, on the wall with the pictures by Corinth, was the slogan: "Decadence exploited for literary and commercial purposes," and, underlined in red, "On public display until yesterday!" Centrally placed on this wall were several works from the National Gallery: *Ecce Homo*, and to its right and left *The Trojan Horse* [Trojanisches Pferd] and *Child in a Cradle* [Kind im Bettchen], then *Portrait of Grönvolt* [Bildnis Grönvolt] (from Bremen), *Walchensee* (from Munich), and two landscapes (from Hamburg and from Mannheim). Also in this room under the special annotation: "acquired through exchange in 1935 for the Kronprinzen-Palais, Berlin," were Beckmann's *Cows* [Kühe] and Nolde's *Young Horses* [Junge Pferde] and *Sunflowers in Bloom* [Reife Sonnenblumen], Scholz's *Amaryllis*, Hofer's *Still Life* [Stilleben], and Peiffer-Watenphul's *Still Life* [Stilleben]. Also here were: Scholz's *Dead Child* [Das tote Kind] ("acquired by Cologne in 1934"), Nolde's *Landscape* [Landschaft] ("acquired by Hamburg in 1934"). There were also two figures by Marcks (*Naked Youth* [Nackter Junge], in bronze, 60 cm in height, and *St. George* [St. Georg], in plaster, 230 cm in height), here without captions but nonetheless accompanied by a label: "was of late especially promoted by writers." On the day of the opening this label also bore the words: "appointed two days ago to the post of Senator at the Academy." In addition (on the wall opposite the Corinth pictures), below the slogan "Removed": Rohlfs's *Chapel* [Kapelle], allegedly from the Städtisches Museum in Hagen, but in fact belonging to the National Gallery, Klee's *Golden Fish* [Goldener Fisch], etc.

In the last room, under the slogan: "Until yesterday such masters were still teaching our German youth," anonymously exhibited pictures (afterward possibly, even probably, removed): an oil painting by Scharff (Düsseldorf), and four pictures by Karl Caspar (Munich), one by Werner Heuser (Düsseldorf), one by Bindel (Düsseldorf), five by Nauen (Düsseldorf), including his *Sunflowers* [Sonnenblumen] from the National Gallery, and one by Burger-Mühlfeld (Hanover). Placed together, all on one wall, were five pictures by Franz Marc, though not identified as such, including the National Gallery's *Tower of Blue Horses* [Der Turm der Blauen Pferde], described as "until November 1936 hanging in the Kronprinzen-Palais, Berlin." Here was also a picture by Kokoschka with the annotation: "until now on display at the Staatsgalerie, Munich." I assume that on the day of the opening the names of museum directors (Buchner, Hanfstaengl, Förster) were added, though these were later removed.

These last inscriptions clearly reveal that the exhibition organizers were not concerned only with art, but were also engaged in a battle against the administration of the public art collections. Especially evident were the digs at the Ministry of Education, as also revealed by the aforementioned inscription regarding Marcks, and by the now removed inscription regarding Purrmann: "In 1936 appointed by the minister of education to the post of director of the Villa Romana." (I give the removed inscriptions here not word for word, but as I remember them.)

In the meantime, the numerous alterations to the inscriptions evince a certain insecurity among the exhibition organizers. Significantly, the last room (pictures by Marc and by professors at the Academy) was closed from 21 July, and the last two rooms were no longer accessible from the morning of 22 July. Nonetheless, Lehmbruck's *Large Kneeling Woman* [Die grosse Knieende] was fetched from the Staatsgalerie in Munich on the eve of the exhibition opening and was then installed in these final rooms, seemingly in order to extend the scope of the display. Likewise, a remaining group of art works—smaller paintings, watercolors, and prints—was housed in two large rooms in the basement, and I only had the chance for a brief glance in there. The question I innocently posed, as to when this further section of the exhibition would be opened, was not answered. On the morning of 21 July numerous art works, which were apparently not intended for the exhibition, were put into a furniture van and driven away.

I gather the exhibition organizers had argued bitterly among themselves during the days before the opening, even resorting to cries of "I'll have you arrested for sabotage," etc. On Friday (16 July) Propaganda Minister Goebbels made a preliminary visit to the exhibition, and he is said to have had a few more pictures removed as not suitable for the display. Half an hour later the Führer is said to have visited the exhibition, accompanied to right and left by Professor Ziegler and the photographer Hoffmann, who provided explanations. Minister Goebbels himself provided no explanations. The Führer's visit is supposed to have lasted a total of around ten minutes, most of this time spent in the last two rooms (with the incriminatory inscriptions directed against the Ministry of Education).

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Original German text from Paul Ortwin Rave, Kunstdiktatur im Dritten Reich, ed. Uwe M. Schneede (Berlin: Argon, 1988), 145–49.

"Die Ausstellung 'Entartete Kunst'"

[excerpt]

BRUNO E. WERNER

Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung — Berlin, 20 July 1937

–

The Day of Art has brought about a definitive clarification of National Socialist ideals and aspirations in this field. With this event, a far-reaching decision has been taken, and one also implying a renunciation of the past, a past that up to this point has persisted too far into our present.

Adolf Hitler has himself spoken as an artist. He has called upon the people in their thousands

to serve as arbiters of art, while he adopts the position of the advocate and the adviser in weighing questions of "for" and "against." The campaign of cultural cleansing that he has declared to counter the danger of cultural disintegration is embodied in the exhibition 'Degenerate Art,' assembled in recent weeks from the holdings of the German museums. Just as the Führer, in his speech, repeatedly took issue with the concept of "modern art," so does this exhibition reject everything in German art that since around 1906 (the foundation, that is to say, of "Die Brücke," of "Der Blaue Reiter," etc.) has been described as "modern."

The plaster casts usually housed in the now rather shabby Arcades at the edge of the Hofgarten have been removed, and the assembled pictures and sculptures put on display in their place. On the burlap-covered walls we find inscribed the expressions of hysterical and communist writers of the late war and postwar years and, on occasion, also the hymns of praise that most of the exhibited works brought forth from critics. Above, we find large red labels bearing the inscription: "Paid for out of the tax contributions of the working German people." Opposite this we see, noted on a number of lateral walls, the words of the Führer himself on the subject of art. Below each picture one finds the name of the painter, and also, in as far as this could be ascertained, the price paid for the work at hand and the name of the museum that had acquired it.

Lovis Corinth has seven pictures in the show, among them a number of Walchensee landscapes from the National Gallery, his portrait of the collector Grönvold from the Bremen Kunsthalle, and the painting *Ecce Homo*. It was to these pictures that Professor Ziegler referred in his speech, observing that interest was only shown in an artist when, after suffering a second stroke, he was producing diseased and incomprehensible daubs. Along the top of this wall are inscribed the words: "Decadence exploited for literary and commercial purposes." ...

A special corner in the exhibition has been allotted to the idiocies of the Dadaists, and another to Jewish painters. Opposite, a wall is inscribed with the names of those engaged in "The Bolshevik Art Offensive," that is to say the members of *Die Aktion*, the revolutionaries of *Der Sturm*, etc. On the tables lie watercolors, prints, and drawings. The paintings themselves are densely hung, and accompanied by inscribed literary slogans and affixed red labels, so that the overall impression has a simultaneously arousing and depressing effect upon visitors.

With this exhibition, through the Führer's will, a line has definitively been drawn under a distinct historical period. We find here the work of a series of painters and sculptors that were, until recently, on public display as the achievement of "leading German artists," but that will in future serve as "documents of the deepest degeneracy among our people and their culture." An era is thereby brought to an end, an era that, precisely in the field of the fine arts, evinced a great many ambiguities and uncertainties, even for people who had the best intentions. Such people will in future be appraised off the true direction of art under National Socialism through the display at the House of German Art on the Englischer Garten: a true Temple of German Art.

"'An den Pranger gestellt'"
E.-R.T.
Hamburger Tageblatt — Hamburg, 20 July 1937
–
In recent years there has been much discussion and writing on the reasons and causes of degeneracy in modern art. Every age gets the art that it deserves. If an era is supported by a strong vital consciousness, and if it is in itself clear-sighted and vigorous, then it will also produce a healthy and beautiful art. If, on the other hand, it is vacuous and torn by inner conflicts, then its art will be stamped by these same qualities. The pictures on display here reflect the conceptual vacuity of the years before the War and, to an even more horrifying degree, the total disintegration, the collapse of all beliefs and all ideals after the end of the War: a state of utter chaos. It is almost physically painful to have to survey the evidence of so much cynicism, nonsense, and disease. Happily, however, one can now also ascertain how far away from us that era now appears to be, and how unrelated to our current patterns of thinking and feeling is all that was once so influential and that seemed to be so valid.

"'Degenerate' Art Popular in Reich"
ANONYMOUS
New York Times — 6 August 1937
–
The effort to emphasize the excellence of "German" art as revealed in the first national exhibition of the Third Reich in the New House of German Art in Munich by contrasting it with an exhibit of "degenerate" or modern art has had a startling result.

The "degenerate" art exhibition is more than three times as popular as the exhibition of "German" or regenerate art.

Since its opening on July 19 the "degenerate" art exhibition has been attended by no less than 396,000 visitors while only 120,000 have thought it worth while to visit the much more elaborate exhibit in the monumental art temple of the National Socialist regime.

Many visitors to the "degenerate" art exhibition have been foreign tourists, especially American and British, but included also are many German art students to whom this exhibit is presumably their last opportunity to study modern art, inasmuch as it is now prescribed by Chancellor Adolph Hitler and is being thrown out of all German museums.

The contrast in attendance is all the more embarrassing because the final selections for the "German" art exhibition were made by Hitler personally, who prided himself on this, his contribution, in his opening speech. Most newspapers therefore suppress the low attendance figures at the "German" art exhibition.

Concerning the "degenerate" art exhibition attendance, the press comments to the effect that thousands of German men and women now are learning from the horrible examples of past mistakes to remove the last uncertainties in their healthy national sentiments and even foreigners have dropped their theoretical reservations in the face of the atrocities displayed.

According to published figures, the sales at the "German" art exhibition amount to more than 250,000 marks, the highest price—15,000 marks—being paid for Constance Gerhardinger's *Peasant Family at Grace*, Hitler and Col. Gen. Hermann Goering are reported to be among the heaviest purchasers at the exhibition.

18

Exposition Internationale du Surréalisme

Paris, 1938

LOCATION AND DATES
Galerie Beaux-Arts, 140, rue du Faubourg Saint-Honoré, Paris.
17 January–22 February 1938

CURATORS
André Breton, Paul Éluard

ITINERARY
None

ARTISTS
Eileen Agar, Hans Arp, John Banting, Hans Bellmer, Wilhelm Bjerke-Petersen, Victor Brauner, André Breton, Serge Brignoni, Bernard Brunius, Edward Burra, Harry Carlsson, Leonora Carrington, Giorgio de Chirico, Anne Clark, Joseph Cornell, Salvador Dalí, P. Norman Dawson, Paul Delvaux, Oscar Domínguez, Marcel Duchamp, Max Ernst, Augustín Espinoza, Wilhelm Freddie, Alberto Giacometti, Stanley William Hayter, Maurice Henry, Georges Hugnet, Marcel Jean, Humphrey Jennings, Rita Kernn-Larsen, René Magritte, Léo Malet, André Masson, Matta, E. L. T. Mesens, Joan Miró, Henry Moore, Stellan Mörner, Paul Nash, Nina Negri, Richard Oelze, Taro Okamoto, Erik Olson, Meret Oppenheim, Wolfgang Paalen, Roland Penrose, Benjamin Péret, Olivier Picard, Pablo Picasso, Man Ray, Kurt Seligmann, Max Servais, Jindřich Štyrský, Yves Tanguy, Sophie Täuber-Arp, Else Thoresen, Toyen, Raoul Ubac, Remedios Varo, Gérard Vulliamy

EXHIBITION CATALOG
Exposition internationale du surréalisme.
Paris: Galerie Beaux-Arts, 1938

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on and in major Surrealist exhibitions at London's New
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of irrevocable change.

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The plaster casts usually housed in the now rather shabby Arcades at the edge of the Hofgarten have been removed, and the assembled pictures and sculptures put on display in their places. On the burlap-covered walls we find inscribed the expressions of hysterical and communist writers of the late war and postwar years and, on occasion, also the hymns of praise that most of the exhibited works brought forth from critics. Above, we find large red labels bearing the inscription: "Paid for out of the tax contributions of the working German people." Opposite this we see, noted on a number of lateral walls, the words of the Führer himself on the subject of art. Below each picture one finds the name of the painter, and also, in as far as this could be ascertained, the price paid for the work at hand and the name of the museum that had acquired it.

Lovis Corinth has seven pictures in the show, among them a number of Walchensee landscapes from the National Gallery, his portrait of the collector Grönwold from the Bremen Kunsthalle, and the painting *Ecce Homo*. It was to these pictures that Professor Ziegler referred in his speech, observing that interest was only shown in an artist when, after suffering a second stroke, he was producing diseased and incomprehensible daubs. Along the top of this wall are inscribed the words: "Decadence exploited for literary and commercial purposes" . . .

A special corner in the exhibition has been allotted to the idiocies of the Dadaists, and another to Jewish painters. Opposite, a wall is inscribed with the names of those engaged in "The Bolshevik Art Offensive," that is to say the members of *Die Aktion*, the revolutionaries of *Der Sturm*, etc. On the tables lie watercolors, prints, and drawings. The paintings themselves are densely hung, and accompanied by inscribed literary slogans and affixed red labels, so

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Hamburger Tageblatt

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RELATED PUBLICATION

Dictionnaire abrégé du surréalisme (Abridged Dictionary of Surrealism). Edited by André Breton and Paul Éluard. Paris: Galerie Beaux-Arts, 1938.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

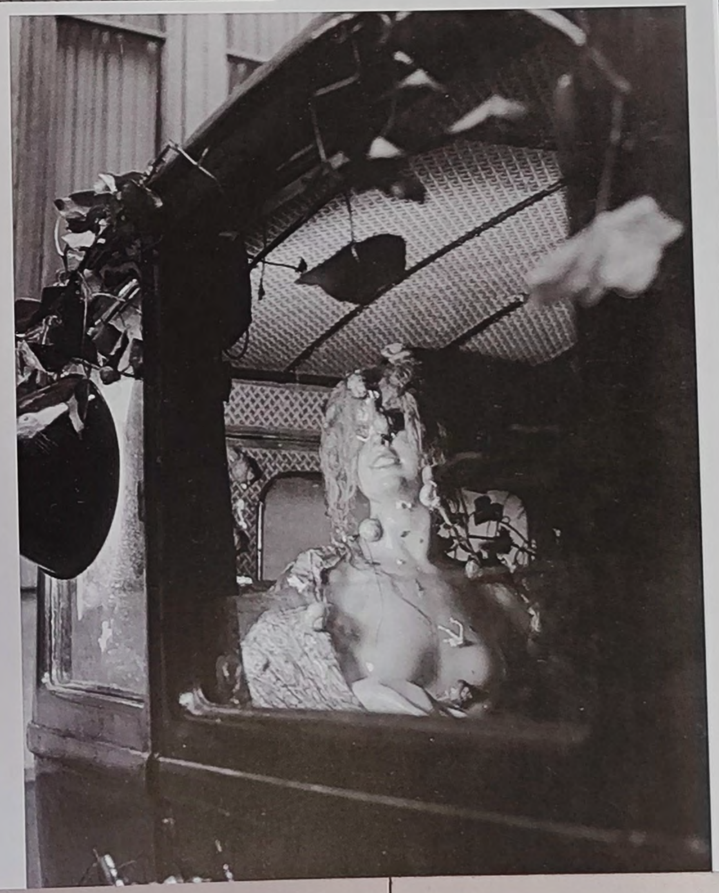
Number of artists: c. 60
Number of works: 229–50
Total attendance: unknown

"Exposition Internationale du Surréalisme" both summarized a movement and broke new ground. Though it was ensconced in fashionable Paris society, the show nonetheless still evoked the psychic disturbance on which Surrealism's initial radicalism was based. Ghosts of the unconscious were not all that stalked the show, for this was 1938, with Nazi Germany moving toward war and Fascist bombs falling on Spain during the week the exhibition opened. It was reported that German military music was piped into the *haut bourgeois* Galerie Beaux-Arts while socialites were spattered with mud at the *vernissage* during Hélène Vanel's risqué performance "The Unconsummated Act"—a fitting image for what soon was to come.

Surrealism had moved from an initial focus on poetry to an emphasis on painting in the 1920s to an obsession with disturbing and exotic objects in the mid-'30s—notably displayed in 1936 at the Paris gallery of tribal-art dealer Charles Ratton and in major Surrealist exhibitions at London's New Burlington Gallery and the Museum of Modern Art in New York. The 1938 Paris show continued this progression into the total environment, foreshadowing Surrealism's embrace of the exhibition as its most distinctive art form in the 1940s. After walking through a courtyard featuring Salvador Dalí's *Rainy Taxi*, 1938 (which would be recreated at the 1939 New York World's Fair), visitors entered the exhibition along the "rue Surréaliste" flanked by sixteen mannequins, each created by a different artist. In the main gallery Marcel Duchamp had hoped to have the viewer's approach trigger lights that would illuminate the artworks in dark rooms, but lighting at the opening was provided by flashlights that Man Ray distributed. A muddy pond alongside a bed was the site of Vanel's ecstatic dance, coal sacks were hung from the ceiling above a glowing charcoal brazier, and graphic works, paintings, and photographs were displayed on revolving doors. With mini-retrospectives of the founders of Surrealism and works by around sixty artists from fourteen countries, the show cataloged an international movement in a world on the brink of irrevocable change.

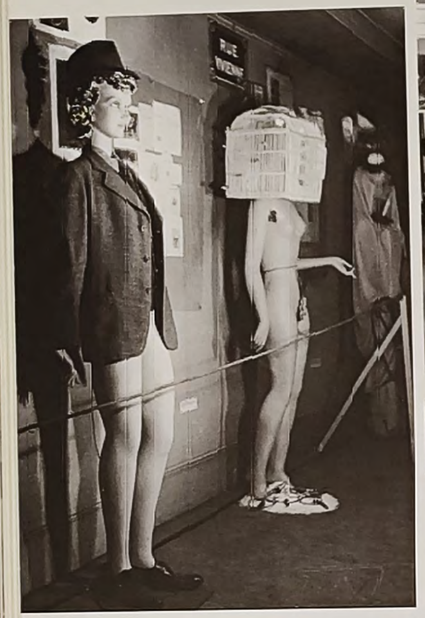
↑ Poster for "Exposition Internationale du Surréalisme," designed by participating artist Kurt Seligmann. Although the gallery, owned by Georges Wildenstein, was typically associated with the presentation of historical works, his London gallery had shown works by the Surrealist André Masson two years earlier.

→ Invitation to the opening, 17 January 1938, announcing "the appearance of object-beings," "a sky of bats," "a rainy taxi," and a performance entitled "The Unconsummated Act" by Hélène Vanel. In the center, soldiers escort "Emigmarelle," an automaton descendant of Frankenstein, who was scheduled to arrive at the exhibition at half past midnight—an appearance that ultimately did not take place.



↗ The creative forces behind the exhibition, André Breton, Paul Éluard, and Marcel Duchamp, parked Salvador Dalí's *Rainy Taxi* in the courtyard of the Galerie Beaux-Arts. This photograph is by the German photographer Josef Breitenbach, one of many photographers who documented the exhibition.

→ Dalí outfitted his taxi with ivy vines, punctured tubes of running water, and two female mannequins—one in the front seat and one in the backseat—adorned with live Burgundy snails.



←← The entrance hallway was lined with 16 mannequins, each dressed by a different artist. From left: mannequins by Marcel Duchamp and André Masson.

← From right: mannequins by Joan Miró, Max Ernst, and Kurt Seligmann. On the wall behind the mannequins were Parisian street signs, Surrealist exhibition announcements, artworks (such as a series of photographs by Hans Bellmer), advertisements, and other printed material.

↙↙ From right: mannequins by Marcel Jean, Léo Malet, and Oscar Domínguez photographed by Josef Breitenbach.

↙ Dalí's *Aphrodisiac Telephone* was one of many Surrealist objects on display.

→ The central room of the exhibition contained Duchamp's *1,200 Coal Sacks*, an installation of burlap sacks hanging from the ceiling. The floor was covered in sand and dead leaves, courtesy of Wolfgang Paalen. Velvet- and satin-draped beds were installed in each corner of the room; a charcoal brazier was placed in the center. Surrealist paintings and photographs covered the walls. Domínguez's *Never*, a phonograph with a protruding pair of woman's legs (right), emitted sounds of hysterical laughter. Photographed by Breitenbach.

→→ More Surrealist object-beings were installed in the main room, including Paalen's *Joy Chair* and Man Ray's wood and mirror work, *Orator*, hung directly above the bed.

→ As directed by Man Ray, who designed the lighting, flashlights were issued to spectators on the opening night. For additional display space, organizers used the inside partitions of revolving doors to exhibit graphic works, paintings, and photographs.

→→ Surrounding one of the beds were paintings by Ernst (far left) and Dalí (second from right). Georges Hugnet's bedside table, with the head of a woman attached to it, was placed among other Surrealist objects, such as Paalen's *Me and Myself* (center).

2806 1938 – *Exposition Internationale du Surréalisme*

← The exhibition was a stage and Surrealist objects were props for Hélène Vanel's performance "The Unconsummated Act." Vanel conducted a séance before a group of artists and spectators surrounding the charcoal brazier. From left: an unidentified man, Georges Hugnet, Man Ray, Paul Éluard, Salvador Dalí, and Wolfgang Paalen.

←← According to published reports of the opening-night event, Vanel sprang from Paalen's pond of reeds, jumped on the bed, and acted out a fit of hysteria.

← Benjamin Péret and an unidentified woman at the opening of the exhibition. The woman rested on Kurt Seligmann's *Ultra-furniture*, a stool created from four legs dressed in pink stockings and high-heeled shoes.

↑ Flashlights in hand, (left to right) Éluard, René Magritte, Léo Malet, and an unidentified woman inspected André Breton's object-chest. A sculpture by Hans Arp was also installed in this gallery (right).

↗ A pair of pantaloons hung from the ceiling of an adjacent room, above another revolving door used to display art. Photographed by Josef Breitenbach.

→ "Where are the *Lares* of Yesteryear? Happy Home Surrealism!" *The Sketch* (London), 26 January 1938. This illustrated journal reproduces several installation views, one of which shows Seligmann adjusting his painting that hung in one of the smaller rooms of the Galerie Beaux-Arts.

January 26, 1938 *The Sketch* 173

WHERE ARE THE LARES OF YESTERYEAR? HAPPY HOME SURREALISM!

UNE VISITE AU SALON DES « SURRÉALISTES »

C'est dans une salle du faubourg Saint-Honoré que les « Surréalistes » présentent leurs œuvres. Toutes sont des mannequins vêtus de façon plus que baroque. L'imagination et la plus haute fantaisie y remplacent l'Art. Voici une élégante en son chapeau-cage.

←← "A Visit to the Salon of the Surrealists," *Paris Soir*, January 1938. The caption reads: "It's in a room of the faubourg Saint Honoré that the Surrealists present their works. All the mannequins are dressed in a very baroque style. Here, imagination and the highest fantasy replace art. Here is an elegant figure in her birdcage hat."

Dessin de ISSAIEV.

AU SALON DES SURRÉALISTES

— Tu t'es sûrement trompé, ça doit être le Salon des Arts... déménagés.

← Caricatures of many works in the exhibition are depicted in this cartoon "At the Salon of the Surrealists," *Le Rire*, 4 February 1938. The caption reads: "You must have made a mistake, this must be the art salon of the deranged."

↙ Cover of the catalog for the "Exposition Internationale du Surréalisme," 1938, in addition to listing the main organizers of the exhibition, André Breton and Paul Éluard, the catalog cover also identifies more unconventional roles, such as Man Ray as the "Master of Light," and Salvador Dalí and Max Ernst as "Special Consultants." The cover also mentions Marcel Duchamp's *1,200 Coal Sacks* as well as the "Odeurs du Brésil," a reference to the smell of roasting coffee that permeated the gallery, a contribution by Benjamin Péret.

↓ Spread from the catalog for the "Exposition Internationale du Surréalisme" The catalog contains entries for 229 works by 60 artists. It also highlights the international nature of the exhibition by listing the various countries (14 total) from which the artists originated (list not pictured.)

EXPOSITION

INTERNATIONALE

DU

SURRÉALISME

Janvier–Février 1938

★

ORGANISATEURS | André Breton. Paul Eluard.

GÉNÉRATEUR-ARBITRE : Marcel Duchamp.

ASSISTANT : Claude Le Gentil.

CONSEILLERS SPÉCIAUX | Salvador Dali. Max Ernst.

MAITRE DES LUMIÈRES : Man Ray.

EAUX ET BROUSSAILLES : W. Penrose.

Mannequins de la Maison P. L. | E. M. habillés par Yves Tanguy, André Masson, Kurt Seligmann, Sonia Mossé, Hans Arp, Oscar Dominguez, Leo Malet, Max Ernst, Marcel Duchamp, Jacques Mire, Marcel Jean, Man Ray, Espinoza, Hans Bellmer, Meret Oppenheim, Kay Sage, Salvador Dali.

Plafond chargé de 1.200 sacs de charbon

Portes « Rouleur »

Lampes Masie

Echos

Odeurs du Brésil

et le reste à l'avenant.

★

GALERIE BEAUX-ARTS

140, Rue du Faubourg Saint-Honoré — PARIS

GIORGIO DE CHIRICO

204. Portrait de l'artiste (1913). *Collection P. Eluard.*
120. La mystère (1933). *Collection J.P. Kiard.*
132. Mélancolie d'un après-midi (1911). *Collection R. Penrose.*
137. Le cerveau de l'enfant (1914). *Collection A. Breton.*
138. Les adieux éternels (1911). *Collection Henri Nocard.*
139. La peauté d'un rêve (1931). *Collection Rt. Penrose.*
61. L'ange joie! (1914). *Collection R. Penrose.*
61. L'ange joie! (1917). *Collection R. Penrose.*

ANTI CLARK

(1 bis. Réalité pessimiste (1827).

JOSEPH CORNELL

62. OBJETS.

SALVADOR DALI

63. La grand masturbateur (1929)
64. L'homme invisible (1929).
65. Naissance des désirs lapidaires (1929).
66. Le sommeil (1937).
67. Plage anthropomorphe (1937)
68. Y en baisers (1937).

OBJETS.

69. Téléphone: aphrodisiaque, etc.:
70. OBJETS.

P. FORMAN DAWSON

71. Le cabinet du bon témoin (1937).
72. Le cavalier echangeur-tonique (1937).

DUCHAMP-VILLON-DUCHAMP

par Oscar Dominguez, Marcel Jean, Georges Hugnet, Annibal Buton., etc...

PAUL DELVAUX

74. Propositions diverses I (1837).
75. Propositions diverses II (1837).

OSCAR DOMINGUEZ

76. Les « Guaiches » (1937). *Coll. Dr Pierre Mabille.*
77. Le salon plage (1937).
77 bis. Madame (1938).

OBJETS.

78. Le Sirocco (1934). *Coll. A. Breton.*
79. Brouette (1936). *Coll. Yves Chardon de Noailles.*
80. Journal (1937).
81. Larme (1937).

MARCEL DUCHAMP

82. Pharmacie (1914). *Collection Man Ray.*
83. Neuf moules mâlic (1936). *Collection H.-P. Roché.*

OBJETS.

84. La Bagarre d'Austerlitz (1921).
85. Rotoi Sidney et moi nous sommes vus nu-lympiennes des Equinoxes aux mous engoin. *(Coll. H.-P. Roché)* (1936).
86. Wendy mode (1914).

MAX ERNST

87. Les hommes n'en savront rien (1923). *Collection A. Breton.*
88. Paysage (1923).
89. L'Idole (1923). *Collection P. Eluard.*
90. Au rendez-vous des amis (les amis se changent en fleurs et en serpents) (1927). *Collection E. de Rosemont.*
91. Chimères (1928). *Collection A. Breton.*
92. Figure humaine (1926).
93. Couple zoomorphe (1923). *Collection Jeanne Bucher.*
94. Portrait érotique-voilé (1934). *Collection G. Lély.*
95. Jardin gobe-oiseaux (1928). *Collection K. Seligmann.*
96. Jardin gobe-oiseaux (1938-36).
97. Le déjeuner sur l'herbe (1936). *Collection E. Penrose.*
98. Les antipodes du paysage (1936).
99. La joie de vivre (1936). *Collection R. Penrose*
100. Le triomphe du surréalisme (1937).

OBJETS.

101. Objet recommandé aux familles (1936).

COLLAGES.

102. Paysage en Irlandie, revue de chez qui préfèrent la navigation sur l'herbe à un buste de femme (1921). Examens et Marseillaise (1915). La Facteur Cheval (1931), etc....
103. Planches originales de Une Semaine de bonté

ESPINOZA

104. Figures dalignées (1937).
105. Coupe de la ligne (1937).
106. Théâtre de la mort (1937).

OBJET.

107. Cristallerie de mémoire (1937).

SCULPTURE.

108. Oeuf (1937).

FREDDIE

109. La prière de la religieuse (1937).
110. Je peux acquérir certainement une meilleure chemise (1937). *Collection P. Holden.*

ALBERTO GIACOMETTI

111. SCULPTURES.

S.-W. HAYTER

112. Peinture (1937).
113. GRAVURES.

MALRICE HENRY

114. DESSINS.
115 bis. OBJET.

GEORGES HUGNET

116. Poème-découpage (1937)

OBJETS.

117. Le table est mise (1937).
118. Livre-objet : Locus solus.

MARCEL JEAN

119. JUGE-FOUTUS.
120. OBJET : L'Horoscope.

HUMPHREY JENNINGS

121. L'usine de parfums (1935).

RITA KJAER LARSEN

122. Connais-toi toi-même (1936).
123. Une journée de plaisir (1937).

RENÉ MAGRITTE

124. Les signes du zéro (1928). *Collection Cl. Spaak.*
125. Le paysage en feu (1926). *Collection Louis Dalí.*
126. Je ne vois pas la... cachée dans la forêt (1929). *Collection A. Breton.*
127. L'assassinat (1926). *Collection E.L.T. Mesens.*

↑ Cover of the *Dictionnaire abrégé du surréalisme*, designed by Yves Tanguy and edited by Éluard and Breton. Although not an official publication of the "Exposition Internationale du Surréalisme," this abridged Surrealist dictionary was published to coincide with the exhibition.

↗ Names of the contributors to the dictionary—many of whom participated in the exhibition—are listed in the front. Each dictionary entry is signed with the author's initials.

→ Each page includes short summaries of cultural figures, abstract concepts, and artistic terms relevant to the Surrealist movement and defined in a Surrealist fashion. The text is juxtaposed with a variety of images, ranging from illustrations and portraits to Surrealist paintings and objects, several of which were presented at the Galerie Beaux-Arts. (Selected translations, p. 290.) Entries include Alfred Jarry, Karl Marx, love, hysteria, representation, and the ready made.

Two definitions

MULTIPLE AUTHORS

Dictionnaire Abrégé du Surréalisme — Paris, 1938

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AMOUR (Love) — "Reciprocal love, the only kind that concerns us here, is the love that triggers the unusual in the everyday, imagination in cliché, faith in doubt, and perception of the internal object in the external object." *(A.B. and P.E.)* "I love you as the fern of old loves the stone that has made it its partner." *(B.P.)* "Love no longer claims to be beyond good and evil, but quite simply transforms all evil into good and every negative into a positive." *(R.C.)* "Everything seems to indicate that love is only a kind of incarnation of dreams corroborating the saying that a woman loved is a dream made flesh." *(S.D.)* "I counter love with ready-made images, instead of images still to be made." *(P.E.)*

RÊVE (Dream) — "The dream is nothing other than involuntary poetry." *(L. H. v. Jakob)* "Quite a number of signs warn us that our sleep psyche reappears intermittently in the waking state, and that inversely the diurnal psyche contributes to our sleeping existence." *(J. V. Troxler)* "The fact is that there are plenty of people who would teach us more with their real dreams than with their fantasy ones." *(Jean-Paul)* "Our dreams are a second life. I have never been able to traverse without a shudder those gates of ivory or horn that separate us from the invisible realm." *(Nerval)* "Nothing is more totally yours than your dreams. Subject, form, duration, actor, spectator—in these comedies you are utterly yourself!" *(Nietzsche)* "Has not the poet opted even more clearly for nature, as being full of meaning, of dreams!" *(Freud)* " . . . to highlight what waking and sleeping representations may have in common. For it is only when the notion of their identity has been totally mastered that we will succeed in clearly understanding their difference, and so reinforce with their unity the materialist conception of the real world." *(A.B.)* "There are no longer any fellow-men in this solitude . . . I am that infinite life of being whose origins go back beyond all I can know, whose fate outstrips the horizons my gaze can reach . . . The solitude of poetry and dreams lifts us out of our awful solitude." *(A Béguin)*

"L'Exposition Surréaliste"

RAYMOND COGNIAT

Beaux-Arts: Revue d'Information Artistique — Paris, 14 January 1938

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Next Monday evening the Surrealist Exhibition will open at the *Beaux-Arts* and the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* gallery. We hear through the grapevine that the exhibition is being anticipated with the most lively curiosity, and we hope visitors will not be disappointed, for no effort has been spared in making this a highly significant event.

True, the time is past when the aim was to show the public the new expressive form, with its brutal, almost cruel frankness, that was Surrealism in its early days; but in our opinion it has never before been possible to offer an overview as comprehensive as this one.

As has already been indicated, the aim is not to show only a particular kind of painting or sculpture, or to put forward new aesthetic theories. The Surrealist Exhibition is intended as something more deeply disturbing, as the gateway to a world of mystery in which burlesque looms less large than anxiety, in which the visitors' laughter conceals their disquiet and their anger is an expression of bafflement.

Surrealism is not a game, but an obsession.

"'Le Journal de Paris"

GEORGES CHARENSOL

L'Intransigeant — Paris, 19 January 1938

—

What Monsieur Raymond Cogniat has set out to achieve at the Galerie des Beaux-Arts is a sweeping history of contemporary art, presenting in succession Impressionism, Fauvism, Cubism, and so on. But these movements are already part of history, while Surrealism is very much of our time. So it was logical to entrust the Surrealists themselves with the organization of their exhibition.

WHAT IS SURREALISM?

Surrealism is essentially a state of mind, and one that manifests itself in all sorts of ways. Sprung from Dadaism, the movement has yielded its key works in the field of poetry, although fiction, theater, cinema, painting, and medicine are not foreign to it. Since retrospection is not the International Surrealist Exhibition's cup of tea, we find no pictures by Hieronymus Bosch or Magnasco, no photos of the Salpetrière, no portraits of Cagliostro or Lautréamont. "The aim," the organizers warn us, "is not to show only a particular kind of painting or sculpture, or to put forward new aesthetic theories. . . . Surrealism is not a game, but an obsession."

Thus Surrealism 1938 was out to generate a distinctive atmosphere, one appropriate to the "magical" objects and pictures on exhibit.

BAT-FILLED SKY—OBJECT-BEINGS

That atmosphere is provided by a decor and lighting unexpected in an Art Gallery. The room is so dark that each visitor is given a flashlight. Fifteen hundred big sacks suspended from the ceiling form a vault; the paintings are hung on four (immobile) revolving doors; unmade beds are hidden away here and there; the moon is reflected in a pool of stagnant water, and at the center of the room are a heap of coal and a brazier.

As for the object-beings, I shall simply say that they are made either of everyday objects put to different uses or assemblages like those to be found in the works of the old Flemish masters: arms protrude from a plaster egg, a mason's wheelbarrow is padded with sumptuous velvet, a piece of furniture has been given human legs, and so on.

AND THE PAINTING

"Surrealism doesn't let its practitioners opt out whenever they feel like it," the chief organizer of this exhibition has written in the *Surrealist Manifesto*. "All the indications are that it acts on the mind the way drugs do." André Breton, however, is not the only one responsible for the strange ambience: that pre-Surrealism Surrealist Marcel Duchamp has worked on it too, along with Paalen, Salvador Dalí and Georges Hugnet.

But, I hear you ask, what about the painting? It has to be said that it is not the main concern here, and apart from some old canvases by de Chirico and Miró, it is the painting that draws least attention. Only Dalí is endowed with pictorial skills subtle enough to give expression to the ghosts that haunt him.

THE OPENING

Last night at ten o'clock André Breton gave the signal to open the doors. Already the elegant crowd assembled around *Rainy Taxi* [Taxi pluvieux] in the Gallery courtyard was leafing through the catalog embellished with Paul Éluard's "Surrealist dictionary." And soon the press of tuxedos and evening dresses was such that the doors had to be closed.

In the hall, beneath an array of nameplates from the "most beautiful streets in Paris," wax dummies dressed by Tanguy, Hugnet, Dalí, Ernst, and Arp helped create a Musée Grevin 1900 atmosphere. In the exhibition hall the flashlights sought out the pictures on the walls; and those who had seen the Surrealist Exhibition in London made their comparisons as they awaited the entrance of Enigmarelle, son of Frankenstein, the robot made by Ireland the Engineer.

"Surrealism doesn't let its practitioners opt out whenever they feel like it. All the indications are that it acts on the mind the way drugs do."

This is as innocent an avowal of partial or total looniness as you could wish for. But the funniest thing is that there are "art critics" ready to see in this passionate demonstration of mental deficiency a "rise in pictorial spirituality," a "tension that liberates from the constraints of the senses."

When all is said and done, it seems to me that the Surrealists get themselves up in arty cast-offs so as to better play the clown and mystify fools.

Obviously the sophisticate relishes passing for a cretin in the eyes of an idiot. But isn't there also a lack of charity, and ultimately something nasty, in playfully bolstering the conviction held by imbeciles that they're enlightening the world?

"Qu'en pensez-vous? Du surréalisme"

LOUIS BRUNET

La Croix — Paris, 20 January 1938

—

The International Surrealist Exhibition that has just opened in Paris is a great success. But it has to be said up front that, to the annoyance of the snobs and bogus aesthetes, it's the success enjoyed by a good joke.

Surrealism? No use digging through your dictionary, you won't find it. And for good reason. Surrealism is no more French than it's Hottentot or Poldavian.

Surrealism springs from minds incapable of making the beautiful and the pleasing according to the normal rules of art. For want of talent they plunge blindly into the outlandish. Thinking, as Flaubert put it, that they're going to shock the bourgeoisie.

In this they go beyond the acceptable limits of naïveté. It's been ages since people were shocked by bad Musée Grevin imitations and cheapjack Grand Guignol. And I'm only talking about the painting. Because here you can also see a pushcart emerging from an egg, and an upside-down mountain spinning like a top. But the Surrealists operate in literature as well, and in theater and even —poor sick people that they are—in medicine.

Listen, too, to the "manifesto of the high priests" of this humbug, itself an offshoot of "Dadaism."

"Surrealism is not a game, but an obsession."

Okay, okay—but there's a cure for that these days.

And hearken again:

"Surrealism doesn't let its practitioners opt out whenever they feel like it. All the indications are that it acts on the mind the way drugs do."

And if you know your Surrealist dictionary by heart—"Anxiety: flashlight that probes with rapier eyes"; "umbrella: blue bird turned black," etc.—you have achieved the Surrealist state of grace that also makes you capable of understanding the presence of 1,200 sacks of coal hanging from the ceiling, four beds covered with yellow velvet, and dummies embellished with beetles, coffee spoons, and birdcages containing goldfish. Capable too of recognizing that a window in the ceiling and a sad pond—full of reeds and real, wet water—are the essence of an exhibition of Surrealist painting.

Having got a thorough grip of all this, you'll also appreciate just how impatient the Cheery Curmudgeon was as the evening of the opening drew nigh.

Just how would the public react in a venue still vibrant with El Greco? Would there be fights? Would madmen slash these eloquent canvases the way they had in London?

These days, unfortunately, you don't defend ideas with such forceful arguments. There *were* fights, but at the door—people trying to get in—and only the arrival of a busload of police restored order to the gridlocked Faubourg Saint-Honoré. It was one o'clock in the morning before the Austrian minister gained entrance to the shrine—and he was luckier than the fiery Arletty, and Grüber the painter whose tux didn't help, and all the others who got no farther than the street door.

Its floor littered with dead leaves and bits of cork—a way of adding to the angst-ridden atmosphere leaking down from those sacks of coal—the hall was packed with the Who's Who of Paris until two o'clock in the morning: Czechs, Germans, Japanese, English—and a few Parisians as well, like Yolande Laffon, Paulette Pax, Gil-Marchex, and some museum curators, all politely doing their best to get the hang of Surrealism.

Faced with an overtly erotic female dummy, one respectable lady grudgingly admitted to a feeling of inadequacy.

André de Fouquières, who considers Surrealism a dream, diffidently acknowledged that he personally was hoping for a gentler, more tranquil kind of dream. True believer Jean-Louis Barrault

"Le Vernissage de l'Exposition Surréaliste"

LE GRINCHEUX JOVIAL

[CHEERY CURMUDGEON]

Chronique des Arts et de la Curiosité, supplement to *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* — Paris, 21 January 1938

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The opening of the International Surrealist Exhibition last Monday drew quite a crowd.

Not wanting to be accused of being overly indulgent in our review of the exhibition, we called on that cheerily anonymous figure, our resident curmudgeon, to sum up the evening for our readers.

As for the exhibition itself, we'll talk about it in an upcoming issue.

Taking its turn after London and New York, Paris is home, since Monday evening, to a significant Surrealist exhibition.

And there's cause for rejoicing, too, for thanks to this exhibition we can at last form some idea of what Surrealism is. And what it is, primarily, as our editor-in-chief Raymond Cogniat wrote in these very columns, is "the drama of objects without necessity and without reality, and the appalling mysteriousness they take on when made to serve purposes for which they were not intended."

If you've grasped that much, you know exactly what Surrealism is all about, and you'll find it quite natural for a car to be used as a swimming pool for a half-naked shop window dummy with snails ambling across her thighs. (Between you and me, I've heard that the master Salvador Dalí will be very grateful to anyone who can show him how to get the snails to run.) You'll find it just as natural, too, for the aforementioned car to be overrun by water plants.

And if you know your Surrealist dictionary by heart—"Anxiety: flashlight that probes with rapier eyes"; "umbrella: blue bird turned black," etc.—you have achieved the Surrealist state of grace that also makes you capable of understanding the presence of 1,200 sacks of coal hanging from the ceiling, four beds covered with yellow velvet, and dummies embellished with beetles, coffee spoons, and birdcages containing goldfish. Capable too of recognizing that a window in the ceiling and a sad pond—full of reeds and real, wet water—are the essence of an exhibition of Surrealist painting.

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André de Fouquières, who considers Surrealism a dream, diffidently acknowledged that he personally was hoping for a gentler, more tranquil kind of dream. True believer Jean-Louis Barrault

shared his sincere admiration of this unique event with Sylvia Bataille. Louis Cheronnet was sporting luminous Surrealist glasses. Ganesco the painter gazed and failed to understand.

Meanwhile an indefatigable phonograph sang hysterically, but its shriekings did not generate the hoped-for anxiety. There were too many tuxedos and evening dresses for Surrealism not to take on a fashionable tinge. And too many women whose untainted aesthetic was in frank contradiction with Surrealist notions.

Restively we awaited the programmed attractions: the appearance of object-beings, incarnadine clover, and so forth.

The biggest success was *acte manqué* [The Unconsummated Act], performed naked by dancer Hélène Vanel on one of the pink satin beds.

There was a mad rush to see her. Thanks to some pushing and shoving I managed to spot eiderdown feathers flying about beneath a bat-filled sky, and a pillow in the air; I heard cries of hysteria, but to my great despair I actually saw nothing—except the ruins of a bed once there with nobody left on it. Even so, it was great, or so I'm assured by my secretary—from a hiding place she'd watched the afternoon rehearsal put on for the voracious eyes of the movie cameras.

As for the authentic descendant of Frankenstein, the "Enigmarelle" robot that was supposed to appear in false flesh and false blood at half past midnight on the dot, we're still waiting. Monsieur Paul Éluard told us we could explain his absence any way we liked; a Surrealist muttered that he'd rusted away—the robot, not Éluard—from having seen no service since 1900.

Alas for my secret hopes, this no-show failed to cause a riot and the audience quietly went on its way. The local café pulled in quite a few of them. These were the Realists.

This evening, the memory of which is likely to linger for quite some time in the minds of all present, was rich in miracles. Nobody fainted, the sad pond received no unforeseen visitors, and out of the hundred or so flashlights lent out at the entrance, ten were finally recovered, two off them from a taxi.

And now we at *Beaux-Arts* all feel ourselves in the process of becoming Surreallists.

"Surrealist Art: Strange Exhibits in Paris"

ANONYMOUS

Times — London, 21 January 1938

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Paris, Jan. 20

An international exhibition of Surrealist art, organized by MM. André Breton and Paul Eduard, leaders of the movement since its inception in the early twenties, is now open at 140, rue du Faubourg St. Honoré. The visitor will do well to read and ponder M. Breton's definition of Surrealism before viewing its material expression. He says: "Everything induces the belief that there exists a certain stage of the spirit in which life and death, the real and the imaginary, the past and the future cease to be perceived in contradiction. It would be vain to find any other motive in Surrealism than the hope of determining this stage."

Precisely what the spectacle, on the opening day, of one of the exhibitors lying in one of the four beds on view had to do with the foregoing definition is not clear to the uninstructed mind. But at least it struck a note of irrelevant fantasy entirely in keeping with most of the exhibits. Here are some of them:

A row of plaster figures representing nude women, to which are attached an astonishing collection of heterogeneous objects such as spoons, fishing nets, broken eggs, and candlesticks.

An open umbrella, beautifully made from sponges. Presumably the bearer is less concerned to shelter himself from the rain than to ensure a steady wetting, neither too great during heavy showers nor too small in the intervals.

An 'esthetic coat-rack" with the inestimable advantage of being so large that it is visible even when the garments are hung on it.

A large daffodil-like contraption of white linen suspended from the ceiling, the bell-shaped nectary being duplicated by an enormous pair of frilly drawers, which must surely have belonged once to a female circus giant of Victorian days. They are tastefully trimmed with vivid scarlet ribbon some 2 in. wide.

A STOOL WITH STOCKINGS

The four beds are notable for little but their mere presence and their equipment with unconscionably dirty and crumpled sheets. No doubt they bear some message for the initiated. Various unrecognizable objects in three dimensions are also on view, together with distorted anatomical objects in profusion. One elegant piece of furniture is a padded stool supported by four silk-stockinged legs with high-heeled shoes on the feet. Even the kitchen is represented by a group of half-opened tins containing plaster imitations of various foodstuffs.

On the two-dimensional plane there are some pictures of ability, many of which convey a nightmare atmosphere with considerable conviction—though here again their inner meaning will be apparent to the elect alone. The work of the Catalan, Salvador Dalí, shows a fine appreciation of colour, leaving an impression that he, like a few others, is capable of first-class work in a less esoteric form.

But for the greater part the pictures fail, whether wilfully or not, to reflect the mysticism or imagination which give real value to the works of a Blake. It is difficult, for example, to take seriously a picture whose principal elements are a gigantic soda-water siphon in a rock-studded desert, with a neatly fried egg in one corner and a 10-franc piece supported by a solitary peanut in the other.

A MOTOR-CAR

But there is one triumph. It stands in the courtyard at the entrance to the exhibition, so that visitors are doubly rewarded on their going in and out. It is a real motorcar, bedecked outside with ivy, the headlights full on, glaring with brilliant uselessness into the light of day. In the back seat is a scantily draped female figure with a few pet snails crawling over her. Beside her is a sewing machine, and on the floor a mass of pampas grass and other vegetation, while in the front sits the chauffeur, an articulated lay-figure peering through a skeleton shark's jaw set open and visor-like around the face. Best of all, from the inside of the roof falls a continuous torrent of water upon the figures beneath—a most notable invention by which the motorist can carry his own weather with him.

It can hardly be by accident that the catalogue carries with it a photograph of one of the artists in company with Harpo Marx. The motor-car justifies that.

"Le Surréalisme en Floraison . . . Une Charge d'Atelier"

RAYMOND LÉCUYER

Le Figaro Littéraire — Paris, 22 January 1938

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In my opinion Surrealist exhibitions are like some fashionable comedies: the organizers and actors get a lot more fun out of them than the audience. And the amiable little band that has turned the Galerie des Beaux-Arts into a louche exhibition space must have really had a great time working on how to shock that Paris upper crust they undoubtedly still see as a trifle snobbish, a trifle credulous.

The trouble is, our jokers are heavy-handed. This time the hoax is far too blatant. And the "suckers" wavered.

It has to be admitted that, all appearances to the contrary, the Surrealist artists are extremely modest. Where others arrogantly display their work in broad daylight, they deliberately plunge them into darkness, hide them away in nooks and crannies, or let you figure them out in the dimness falling from the charcoal gray ceiling.

You've already heard that to visit the exhibition you have to be given a little flashlight. But despite the quality of the batteries as vaunted in a very real advertisement, under the beam of your flashlight light paint turns dark and dark paint turns black. What the critic should do is stroll through the place holding an enormous car headlight—unlit. First, this would be more Surrealistic, and secondly it would allow him to credit the pictures with all the virtues a two-watt bulb fails to reveal.

The Surrealist painters have provided further evidence of their inherent humility. Indisputable proof of a naturally Christian soul, Tertullian and Louis Veuillot would have called it. At the exhibition at the Beaux-Arts, the paraphernalia surrounding the presentation (in shadow) of a few paintings and panels consumes so much space so provocatively that the painting comes in strictly second.

For the visitor's entire attention—especially if the visitor is a lady—is drawn to the dummies with their laboriously zany accoutrements, near the bed in the vicinity of the stagnant water not far from the coal sacks hanging all over the place (that kind of decoration really costs a bundle these days) or over by the knickknacks so patiently copied from the ones alienists supply their unfortunate patients with.

Dangerous humility. Amid all the bric-a-brac and all the clutter, how could anyone find the time and determination to hunt out individual talents? Behind the eternal student's prank the writer disappears, behind the dauber's hoax the painter can no longer be seen.

Surrealism as understood by the Surrealists of the Faubourg Saint-Honoré found respectability a long time ago. It even has its museum—the Musée Dupuytren. Favorite Surrealist themes are freak show items like the armless, legless woman, the "mermaid" with her breasts exposed, and the two-headed calf. No need for twenty-five lessons to master Surrealist decoration and art—you can pick them up in no time. And when you're on vacation and it's raining, you can do cut-price Surrealism with everyday bits of junk from the attic.

Undoubtedly it was the fault of the flashlights that I found no masterpieces on Faubourg Saint-Honoré. This is not to say that some day a genius won't succeed in getting something new out of Surrealism. But right now there's nothing new and unprecedented about Surrealism, even when taken seriously.

You can find Surrealism in Shakespeare. Unearth it in Nordic literature, in Flemish and Spanish painting. Hieronymus Bosch and Peter Bruegel are Surrealists. Goya too, sometimes. But it was in the laboratories of German and Russian Romanticism that Surrealism's true essence was distilled. The importance accorded the object, the mystery of everything that exists, endures, and evolves despite its lack of a carnal nature; the unexpected, sometimes tragic connections that can arise in the most prosaic document or in a love letter; the reactions of a troubled sexuality to some falsely significant detail; the unknown regions into which hysteria drives reason; the phantasmagorical bestiary that can inhabit our dreams: what is all this but the material that the Surrealist poet or painter strives to use: late-blooming flowers in the marshy, noxious depths of Romanticism.

This form of Romanticism is not really French. To work with it requires a turn of mind people of our race can only acquire artificially. Whence the factitious Surrealism, put together from recipes, formulas, and commonplaces, that is currently being offered to us and is turning into an art student's practical joke. One would-be witty exhibitor addresses us in the name of the "minister of the national imagination." National? Not really, dear friend.

"La Peinture: Du Naïf au Pervers" [excerpt]

ANDRÉ LHOTE

Ce Soir — Paris, 22 January 1938

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. . . Does the unconscious, whose messages the Surrealists like to think they capture—sometimes with a surreptitious helping hand—only surface in response to the most eccentric demands? An idea as pointless and absurd as the claim that the "natural" is all. Having said this, it has to be admitted that this event, like all well-organized contemporary art exhibitions, holds the visitor's attention with some excellent works. The whole Surrealist group—poets, painters, and sculptors—has given of its best with pieces whose beauty is evident to an already adoring public; together with objects, some of which—like Domínguez's *Never* [Jamais], in which a hand caresses whirling breasts in the shadow of a phonograph horn swallowing a woman's body—are utterly spellbinding. However, this exhibition at the Galerie des Beaux-Arts, that temple to the eighteenth century, is not as unsettling as one might have expected, the cruelty and aggressiveness of bygone days having given way to the most skillful aesthetic blandishments. One does not even feel threatened by this darkness with its shimmering pools of water, nor by the hanging sacks: Parisian taste and charm have done their work. Only Picasso, away in the darkest corner, continues his grimacing. The opening was very modish, with everyone in evening dress—an abject, outdated disguise to which I, along with many artists, would have preferred the pullover that symbolizes other forces and can bear other, more revolutionary embellishments.

"Au Jour le Jour: Echos"

ANONYMOUS

Le Journal — Paris, 25 January 1938

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As one of its most loyal devotees puts it, Surrealism is a succession of "subconscious, Surrealistic, extravagant, paranoiac, hypnogazic, extrapictorial, phenomenal, superabundant, supersubtle images of concrete irrationality."

For another it's "the drama of objects without necessity and without reality, and the appalling mysteriousness they take on when made to serve purposes for which they were not intended."

Got the gist? If so, you can head off to the Surrealist Exhibition that's just opened on

Faubourg Saint-Honoré without too much anxiety about what you're going to see—anxiety, according to the Surrealist Dictionary, being no more than a "flashlight that probes with rapier eyes." And the twelve hundred sacks of coal hung from the gallery ceiling are solidly attached, and the mannequins equipped with rubber tubes, coffee spoons, birdcages for goldfish, and diverse draperies are mysterious but harmless.

"Actualité du Surréalisme" [excerpt]
GUY CROUZET
La Grande Revue — Paris, February 1938
–

... Quite a curious Parisian event, this opening. There was what's usually called the Paris Première Elite, plus an extra contingent of pretty American girls, German Jews, and dotty old English ladies—it has to be said that the pretty Americans and dotty old English ladies really are loyal to the Surrealist cause. For good measure there was quite a number of art students and Sunday painters, and all together they bore down on the narrow gallery in an irresistible tide: never had so many society people been trampled since the Bazar de la Charité fire.

Things lasted from ten o'clock in the evening until two o'clock in the morning, with the Surrealist artists having to form a human barricade to protect their fragile works. The old-guard Parisians emerged muttering, "It's idiotic, and not even funny!" as the English ladies gaped admiringly and the Central European intellectuals phlegmatically took notes.

Not everybody approved—but everybody felt the impact.

So how did what might have seemed an entertainment for a lunatic asylum—an attempt to make tangible the absurdity of dreams and wild imaginings—become the sensation of the 1938 Paris "season"? How did it come to be so talked about, albeit mockingly?

"Snobbery" is too facile an answer. Most of the time snobbery is just a more or less premature or warped expression of some legitimate or underlying trend. The Encyclopedia, Romanticism, Symbolism, and Impressionism all started out as diversions for snobs, just like the back-to-nature movement and Marie-Antoinette playing the milkmaid. The idle rich may not be all that bright, but they're often ahead of the game when it comes to spotting shifts in ideas and taste.

Surrealism goes back twenty years now, and for me its appeal to snobs—which it never had during its pioneering years—is proof, if any were needed, of its fit with certain tendencies of the human spirit in 1938. And even more so in 1940 or 1945.

These tendencies, to which I bring no moral or social judgment, are *a taste for the absurd* and *liberation through the waking dream from the ever harsher constraints imposed by the external world*; the taste for the absurd being, as Freud has so admirably demonstrated in *Jokes and Their Relation to the Unconscious*, a yearning for release, and for revenge on an oppressive reality.

It seems, in this second third of the twentieth century, that the worldwide role of the waking dream can no longer be discussed seriously. Everywhere it finds its simplest, most familiar outlet in the cinema, that mighty factory of controlled dreams. Furthermore, it has given rise to more or less pronounced *national* manifestations: most strikingly, Hitlerism is a waking dream that dispenses the German masses from thought and hunger, while it seems that the cult of Monsieur Stalin and other collective illusions works in somewhat the same way for the Russians. Here at home the trancelike devotion of the partisans of certain "saviors" is well known; and more specifically, the mentality of well-meaning "cagoulards" shows just how the waking dream can lead its victims to the most unpleasant realities. ...

Surrealism has isolated the toxin and set the waking dream to work in its pure state: not on the masses, but on individuals, in whom it satisfies the same anti-reality aspirations in a simpler, subtler way than collective mania.

There are two ways of escaping from Western reality. The first consists in *imagining that you're changing reality* and, via forms of delusionary fanaticism—fascism, communism, total economic planning—helping to create a more just, more human world. The second consists in purely and simply denying reality: this is the fundamental role of poetry, which Surrealism emphasizes above all else.

Let's reread the definition of Surrealism found in the *Manifesto* of 1924:

"SURREALISM, *n. Psychic automatism by which one sets out to express, either verbally, in writing, or in any other way, the real functioning of thought. Dictation by thought, in the absence of all control by reason and detached from all aesthetic or moral concerns.*"

"ENCYCL. Philos. *Surrealism is based on a belief in the superior reality of certain hitherto neglected forms of association, in the omnipotence of the dream and the disinterested play of thought. It tends to destroy definitively all other psychic mechanisms and to take their place in resolving the principal problems of life.*"

Thus we see that in the name of the "omnipotence of the dream" and the "disinterested play of thought" Surrealism systematizes the break with reason and raises it to the status of a doctrine. It deliberately leads us into a world in which two and two make five and inside whose upside-down houses objects at liberty live out unforeseen destinies.

Is this any more than an acute manifestation of a chronic, widespread illness with its roots in the collapse of accepted values since 1914 through 1918? Just across our borders an entire people is witnessing, for example, the cult of race and blood "destroying definitively all other psychic mechanisms and taking their place in resolving the principal problems of life"; and this abdication of reasoned intelligence is producing results like the strictly supervised sale of butter from authentic Aryan cows and what amounts to the recreation of the caste of the untouchables in the Europe of the twentieth century. Here too we have the omnipotence of the dream; but one has the right to prefer frank avowal and poetic systematization.

In highlighting, in its own field, the fault lines of a civilization driven to deny the very intelligence that has created it, Surrealism stands out as the most authentic, most lucid expression of today's spiritual trends. Ultimately it's up to others to form a judgment of those trends.

19

First Papers of Surrealism

New York, 1942

LOCATION AND DATES
Coordinating Council of French Relief Societies, Inc.,
451 Madison Avenue, New York, 14/15 October–7 November 1942

CURATORS
André Breton, Marcel Duchamp

ITINERARY
None

ARTISTS
Hans Arp, William Baziotes, Victor Brauner, André Breton, Alexander Calder, Leonora Carrington, Marc Chagall, Giorgio de Chirico, Joseph Cornell, Paul Delvaux, Oscar Domínguez, Marcel Duchamp, Jimmy Ernst, Max Ernst, Esteban Francés, Alberto Giacometti, David Hare, Morris Hirshfield, Frida Kahlo, Gerome Kamrowski, Frederick Kiesler, Paul Klee, Wifredo Lam, René Magritte, André Masson, Matta, Joan Miró, Henry Moore, Robert Motherwell, Leonard Nelson, Richard Oelze, Gordon Onslow-Ford, Meret Oppenheim, Benjamin Péret, Pablo Picasso, Barbara Reis, Kay Sage, Kurt Seligmann, Hedda Sterne, Yves Tanguy, Lawrence Vail, Remedios Varo. Other exhibits: Native American objects.

EXHIBITION CATALOG
First Papers of Surrealism. Foreword by Sidney Janis, essay by Robert Allerton Parker, and letter from Henri Matisse. New York: Coordinating Council of French Relief Societies, 1942.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
Number of artists: c. 42
Number of works: c. 105
Total attendance: unknown

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Papers of Surrealism" was not entirely a Surrealist show,
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Dictionnaire abrégé du surréalisme from the 1938
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dealer Sidney Janis to bring their friends to play
s. More serious matters found a way into "First Papers"
and other young artists protested the display of a bust
head of the collaborating French government in Vichy, by
rdinating Council of French Relief Societies.

Faubourg Saint-Honoré without too much anxiety about what you're going to see—anxiety, according to the Surrealist Dictionary, being no more than a "flashlight that probes with rapier eyes." And the twelve hundred sacks of coal hung from the gallery ceiling are solidly attached, and the mannequins equipped with rubber tubes, coffee spoons, birdcages for goldfish, and diverse draperies are mysterious but harmless.

"Actualité du Surréalisme" [excerpt]
GUY CROUZET
La Grande Revue — Paris, February 1938
—

. . . Quite a curious Parisian event, this opening. There was what's usually called the Paris Première Elite, plus an extra contingent of pretty American girls, German Jews, and dotty old English ladies—it has to be said that the pretty Americans and dotty old English ladies really are loyal to the Surrealist cause. For good measure there was quite a number of art students and Sunday painters, and all together they bore down on the narrow gallery in an irresistible tide: never had so many society people been trampled since the Bazar de la Charité fire.

Things lasted from ten o'clock in the evening until two o'clock in the morning, with the Surrealist artists having to form a human barricade to protect their fragile works. The old-guard Parisians emerged muttering, 'It's idiotic, and not even funny!" as the English ladies gaped admiringly and the Central European intellectuals phlegmatically took notes.

Not everybody approved—but everybody felt the impact.

So how did what might have seemed an entertainment for a lunatic asylum—an attempt to make tangible the absurdity of dreams and wild imaginings—become the sensation of the 1938 Paris "season"? How did it come to be so talked about, albeit mockingly?

"Snobbery" is too facile an answer. Most of the time snobbery is just a more or less premature or warped expression of some legitimate or underlying trend. The Encyclopedia, Romanticism, Symbolism, and Impressionism all started out as diversions for snobs, just like the back-to-nature movement and Marie-Antoinette playing the milkmaid. The idle rich may not be all that bright, but they're often ahead of the game when it comes to spotting sh

Surrealism goes b
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or 1945.

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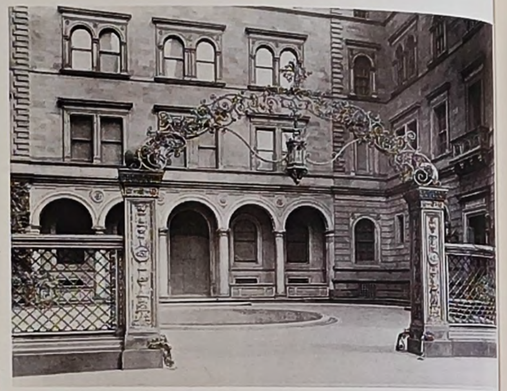
Let's reread the de
in the *Manifesto* of 19

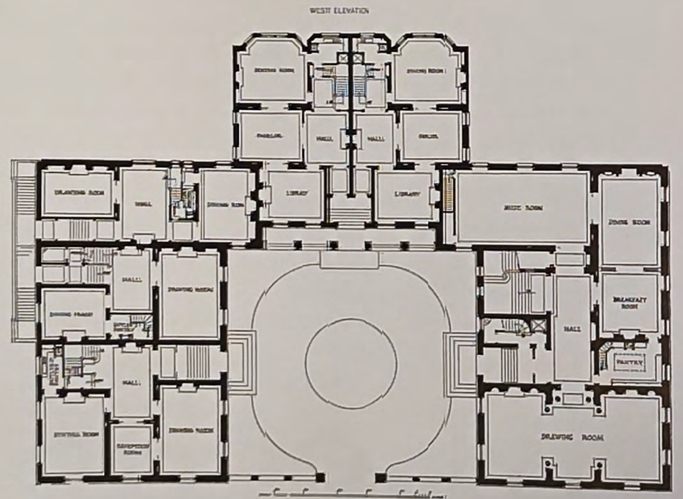
"SURREALISM,
which one sets out to ex

Despite its name, which alludes to documents filed by immigrants to the United States, "First Papers of Surrealism" was not entirely a Surrealist show, including as it did paintings by artists associated with other movements, such as Paul Klee, Marc Chagall, and Robert Motherwell. Nonetheless, the exhibition consisted largely of work by European Surrealists who had fled France following the German occupation and by the younger American artists critically influenced by them. Organized in only a month and a half by André Breton, and installed by Marcel Duchamp, the show combined the poetry, oddity, and humor characteristic of Surrealist productions, and it has achieved renown as a classic exhibition of the movement.

Duchamp's installation of white string—obscuring the exhibits and transforming the formal drawing-room setting—was the most noteworthy feature of the display, and it became the center of attention at the show and in the press. At first Alexander Calder attached pieces of paper to the string, referring to the show's title, but these were removed to leave the striking presentation that appears in the photographs that Duchamp commissioned, one of which was printed upside down in the March 1943 issue of the Surrealist magazine *VVV*.

Similar to the *Dictionnaire abrégé du surréalisme* from the 1938 Surrealist exhibition in Paris, a catalog-as-Surrealist-document accompanied this show; it features "compensation portraits" of the artists, such as a photograph of an Eskimo representing André Masson and an old man with a flowing beard standing in for Max Ernst. Duchamp designed the cover, with bullet holes on the front and a photograph of Swiss cheese on the back. This same wry humor emerged at the opening night of the show: Duchamp asked the sons of art dealer Sidney Janis to bring their friends to play ball among the guests. More serious matters found a way into "First Papers" as well, when Matta and other young artists protested the display of a bust of Marshall Pétain, head of the collaborating French government in Vichy, by the sponsoring Coordinating Council of French Relief Societies.





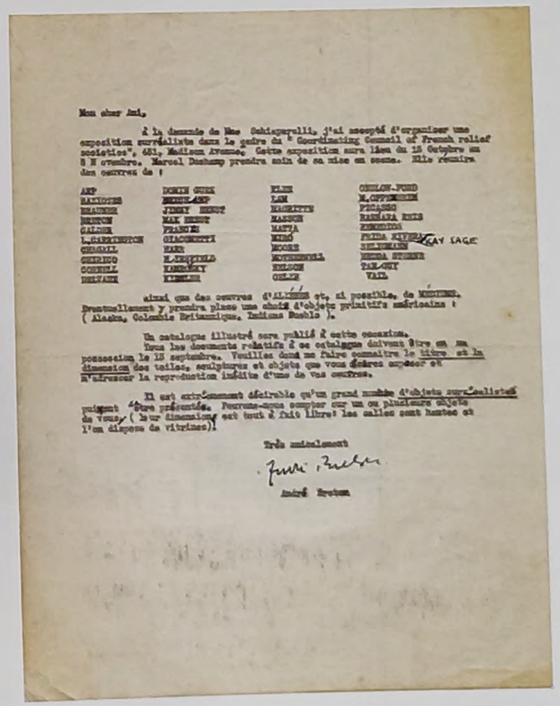
HENRY VILLARD, RESIDENCE, NEW YORK CITY.
1885

↖ ↑ 451 Madison Avenue between 50th and 51st Streets, New York. Designed by McKim, Mead and White in 1884, the building—known both as the Villard Houses and the Whitelaw Reid mansion, after previous owners—had been vacant several years before the Coordinating Council of French Relief Societies, a war relief agency, called it home in 1942.

← First-floor plan, 451 Madison Avenue. The exhibition took place in a drawing room on the second floor, which has exactly the same footprint as the first-floor drawing room on the right-hand side of the building, measuring 25 × 50 feet (7.6 × 15.2 meters). Two smaller rooms, directly behind the drawing room, were also used.

↑ Max Ernst's painted announcement, *Surrealism*, for "First Papers of Surrealism," was created at the request of Marcel Duchamp. Below the word "Surrealism," Ernst incorporated the exhibition dates, "October 15" (left) and "November 7" (right). In addition, the hours, "Monday–Friday 11 to 5, Sat. 2 to 5?30," and admission fees, ".45 cents + 5 cents tax," were painted across the bottom left and right of the canvas.

→ Letter from André Breton, undated. Elsa Schiaparelli, fashion designer and avid supporter of Surrealism, had asked Breton to organize the show. He subsequently invited the 41 artists listed on the letter, specifically requesting Surrealist paintings, sculptures, and objects, and corresponding dimensions, titles, and photographs for the forthcoming catalog. The letter also mentions that Duchamp will be responsible for the installation of the galleries.



Mon cher Ami,

A la demande de Mme Schiaparelli, j'ai accepté d'organiser une exposition surréaliste dans le genre de ' Coordinating Council of French relief societies', 451, Madison Avenue. Cette exposition aura lieu du 15 Octobre au 8 N ovembre. Marcel Duchamp prendra soin de sa mise en scene. Elle reunira des oeuvres de :

ARP	DOMIN GUEZ	KLEE	MASSON-FUMI
MATTA	MIRO-ARP	LAM	M.Oppe nheim
BRAUNER	TANGY HENRY	LEGER	PICASSO
BRETON	MAX HENRY	MASSON	RAMIREZ RUIZ
CALDER	PARMEN	MATTA	RICHTER
L.Fairbanks	CALDERWELL	MIRO	SAINT PHALLE
CHIRICO	KAHN	MOORE	SEBASTIAN
DELVAUX	M.Ernst	MORRIS ROBERT	WOLFGANG PAALEN
DOMINGUEZ	KENNEDY	NELSON	TAN-GUY
DUCHAMP	KOLLWITZ	ONSLOW	YAN

ainsi que des oeuvres d'ENFANTS et, si possible, de Moderne. Eventuellement y prendra place une choix d'objets primitifs américains : (Alaska, Colombie Britannique, Indiens Pueblo).

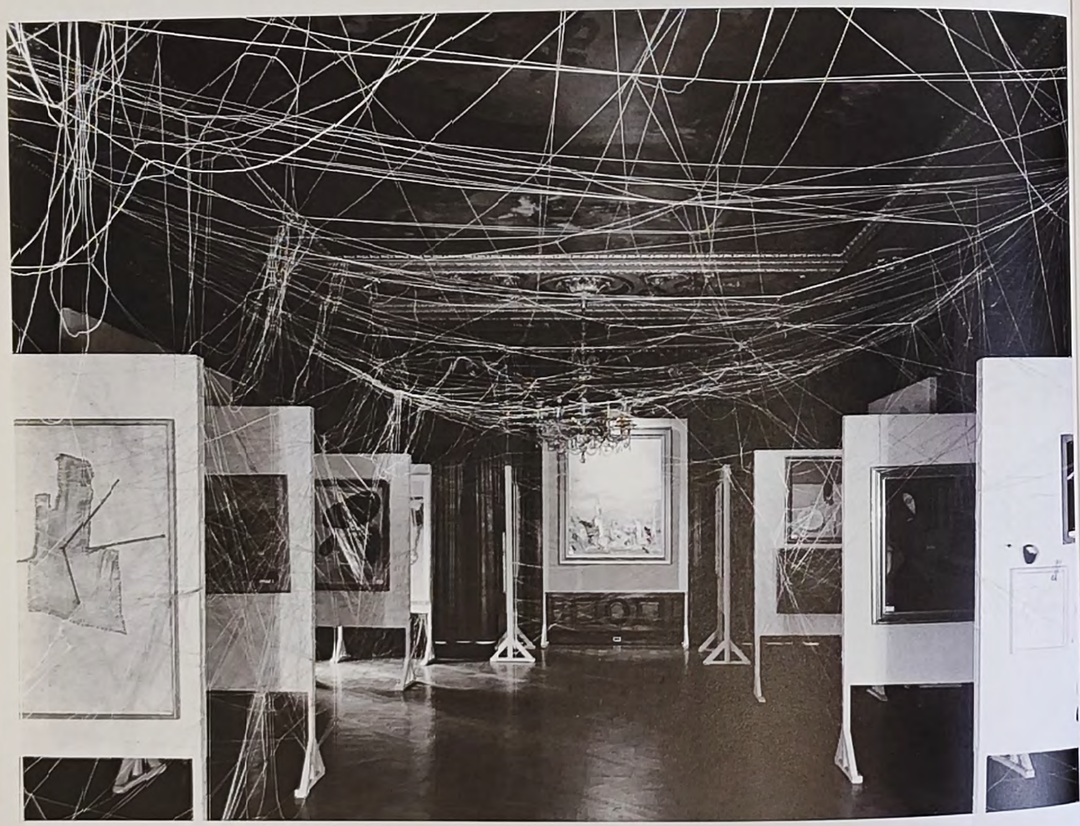
Un catalogue illustré sera publié à cette occasion.
Tous les documents relatifs à ce catalogue doivent être en ma possession le 15 septembre. Veuillez donc me faire parvenir le titre et la dimension des toiles, sculptures et objets que vous désirez exposer et m'adresser la reproduction inédite d'une de vos oeuvres.

Il est extrêmement désirable qu'un grand nombre d'objets surréalistes puissent être présentés. Pourrons-nous compter sur un ou plusieurs objets de Vous? (La hauteur est tout à fait libre! Les salles sont hautes et l'on dispose de vitrines)!

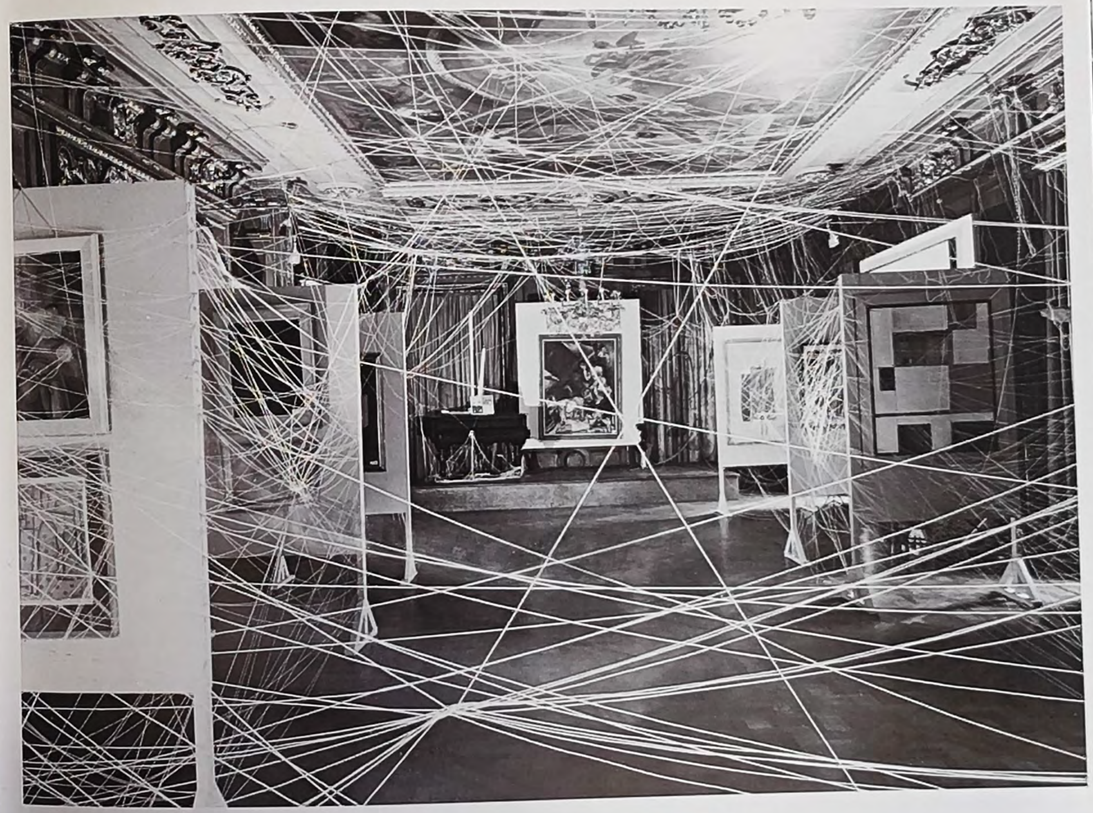
Très amicalement

André Breton

↓ The "First Papers of Surrealism" installation consisted of approximately 105 works by both European and American artists exhibited on free-standing partitions surrounded by the original frescoes, gilded panels, and crystal chandeliers of the mansion's formal drawing room. Marcel Duchamp's installation of white twine enveloped ceiling, partitions, and the works themselves; he commissioned photographer John Schiff to document the show.



↓ Partially visible through Duchamp's twine and located on the platform in the rear of the room are (left to right) a sculpture by Max Ernst on top of the piano, a painting by Marc Chagall, and a sculpture by Alexander Calder. A small number of Native American objects were also included among the Surrealist works.



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↓ Front and back cover of the catalog for "First Papers of Surrealism," designed by Marcel Duchamp, 1942. The front cover is a photograph of a stone wall from Kurt Seligmann's barn in upstate New York; the holes refer to bullets that Duchamp had fired into the side of the barn. Subverting expectation, the title and dates of the exhibition appear on the back cover, surprinted on what has come to be accepted as a photograph of Gruyère cheese.

First Papers of Surrealism [exh. cat.]
Foreword
SIDNEY JANIS
New York, 1942

–

The Surreallist point of view has always been present in the province of art. Blake, Bosch, Uccello are but a few of the spiritual stations that carry it deep into the past. These men were isolated from each other, but in the 20th century, the torch is in the hands of a considerable body of artists that has devoted itself as a group to a passionate espousal of the Surrealist spirit. They have identified its essential nature, which is multifold and ever-changing, and given it a name.

This communion, a sort of festive ceremonial dedicated to the imagination, has already persisted for two decades. It is not the factor of time, itself, that is so impressive, for the pure fire of Cubism and *collage*, which has set in motion continuing metamorphoses of creative energy, was brief in duration, lasting from 1910 to 1913. The imposing fact is that Surrealism from its inception, became and has ever since remained the cardinal germinating source for many of the most gifted and far-seeing artists on the international scene.

What is there in our time that creates the condition favorable for this persistent and magnetic domination? Is it perhaps that Surrealism exists in the very lives of a people functioning in a power age, inherent in the fabulous unreality of living in a shockingly real period; that it is embedded in the fantastic implications underlying the bald mechanistic aspect of that age?

Certainly it is the manifestation of the personality of our time, of its nervous system and its mentality, for Surrealist works of art synthesize the world of today in esthetic characters solely its own product. These characters help to establish our modern iconography. In making them, there is neither imitation nor concession to familiarity. The moral code of Surrealist artists is the code of science, the *disinterested* attitude of research. The work of art, a "communicating vessel" of spiritual values, has also become a scientific mirror held up to nature and the contemporary world, where we may see, even if we do not yet recognize, inner and secret processes which only fleetingly come into focus under the spotlight of commonplace reality.

The period in which Dada and Surrealist art, progressive stages out of Cubism, has flourished has been one torn apart by the devastation of wars and interwar defeatism. Far from being paralyzed by such a state of affairs, Dada lashed out anarchistically to destroy the content, the materials, the very values of art, and Surrealism, christened with the first manifesto of André Breton in 1924, proceeded with this heritage toward the goal of "revolution in consciousness."

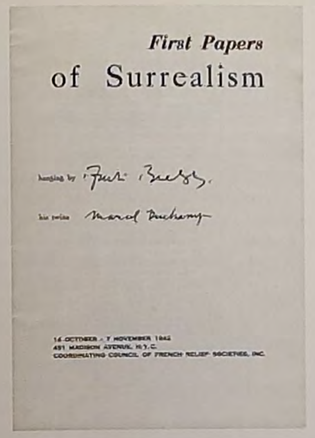
It is not remarkable that Surrealism should have evolved this viewpoint—the esthetic counterpart of an attitude fecundated in the world-mind by cataclysmic changes in science and industry. Even in esthetics, this reorientation had already begun on an all-encompassing scale in Cubism and *collage*. But the Surrealists formulated a concrete program and began systematically to develop it. Taking a "revolution in consciousness" to correspond first and foremost with psychological processes, they obtained the key from the great realist, Freud, for releasing material from that vast domain hitherto considered obscure and unfathomable, the realm of the unconscious.

Surrealist art, transmuting subjective elements into visual images with the intention of symbols equal in ingenuity to the invention of machines, levels off conscious with unconscious processes, and by this act renders them both phenomenal. Pictorially it gives form to the anatomy of intangible reality—the grain of modern sensibilities, the substance of feelings, of automatic responses and associations, dreams, totem, myth and fable, of the intimate nature of things and the nature of the intimate relations of things.

"Explorers of the Pluriverse"
ROBERT ALLERTON PARKER

–

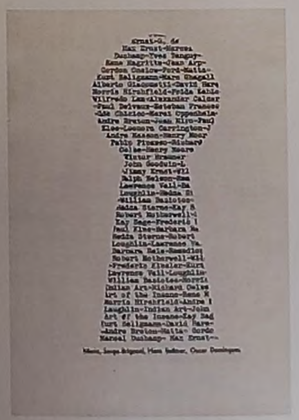
The "realist" polishes his lenses to capture the fleeting aspects of the external world. He prides himself upon the soundness and the sanity of his vision. The totality of that objective world he never doubts. But there are others: they cultivate the inner vision, abandon the paved highway of standardized points of view, brave the quicksands of non-conformity, and seek their own path through the jungle of subjectivity. For artists of this type, no less than seers and poets, the external world provides no more than the symbols and alphabet of communication, and the "field" into which they may project their visions.

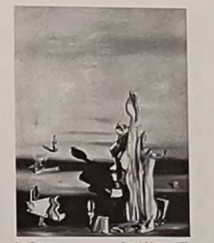

First Papers
of Surrealism
hanging by Andre Breton
his twine Marcel Duchamp
14 OCTOBER - 7 NOVEMBER 1942
451 MADISON AVENUE, N.Y.C.
COORDINATING COUNCIL OF FRENCH RELIEF SOCIETIES, INC.

↑ Title page of the catalog for "First Papers of Surrealism," crediting André Breton with the exhibition's hanging and Duchamp with the installation of "his twine." Breton contributed a pictorial essay that combines such diverse sources as quotes from the philosopher G. W. F. Hegel, film stills from Luis Buñuel's *L'age d'or*, and a work by sixteenth-century Dutch painter Pieter Bruegel.

↗ → Spreads from the catalog. Alongside the artworks, the catalog includes "compensation portraits" of the artists: found images used in place of true photographic portraits. For example, an unidentifiable gentleman stands in for Yves Tanguy, an Eskimo represents André Masson, and a photograph by Walker Evans represents the artist Leonora Carrington.

↘ Names of artists are printed in the shape of a keyhole on this page of the catalog.




Yves Tanguy: *Dreams à l'observer* (1942)

André Masson: *Métamorphose en sept jeunes de couleur* (1942)

Yves Tanguy

André Masson

Pablo Picasso

David Hare

René Magritte

Alberto Giacometti

André Breton

Leonora Carrington

Leonora Carrington: *Le chien* (1942)

↓ Pictured throughout the catalog, each "compensation portrait" represents an artist, named below each portrait, who participated in the exhibition. For example, a young boy stands in for Matta, and a laughing couple for Joan Miró.

Such adventurers are by no means alien newcomers to this continent. America has produced pioneers of the inward realm no less than of distant horizons. Old Cotton Mather himself published a book entitled "The Wonders of the Invisible World" which contains passages reminiscent of the diabolic visions of Hieronymus Bosch. Jonathan Edwards, in the middle of the eighteenth century, preached his famous sermon "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God," which literally had his listeners writhing in the aisles. Its power was generated by the inner compulsion of Jonathan's obsession, a compulsion that exploded like a bomb into fiery, devastating eloquence, which spread terror among the credulous. Some such obsessive power has been exercised by prophets and messiahs of all the egregious sects and cults which have proliferated upon this continent. The folklore and folk-art of such cults, from Mother Ann Lee and Joseph Smith to Father Divine, invites examination and preservation.

I have neither time nor space to touch more than superficially upon the endless procession of native eccentrics who have, in various media and arts, sought to project their obsessive vision of the invisible. Edgar Allan Poe springs most directly to mind—though without doubt the psychoanalysts and psychiatrists have picked this case to the bone. Poe is a superb example of "marginal" consciousness—the eternal rebel, Lucifer the fallen, diabolically possessed, driven to express his inner vision of a demonic universe. In Poe, everything is calculated and cryptographic, all motives are malefic. A sort of mephitic ether numbs the reader with this poet's specially concocted poison, in which state he senses the erotic obscenity, half-masked, in such lines as these—

"Well I know this dim lake of Auber,
This misty mid region of Weir:
Well I know this dank tarn of Auber,
This ghoul-haunted region of Weir."

Herman Melville is another giant who utilized the space-time symbols of the outward world to project the sombre vision of his sombre universe. In "Benito Cereno" he presents a vivid allegory of appearance and reality, puncturing the safe and sane assumptions of the "normal" vision. In the words of the victim, Don Benito, he points his moral:

"... you were with me all day; stood with me, sat with me, talked with me, looked at me, ate with me; and yet your last act was to clutch for a villain not only an innocent man, but the most pitiable of all men. To such degree may malign machinations and deceptions impose. So far may even the best man err, in judging the conduct of one with the recesses of whose condition he is not acquainted."

William James rescued from oblivion the obscure genius of Benjamin Paul Blood (1832–1919). Blood was a village philosopher of Amsterdam, New York, most of whose literary output consisted of letters addressed to the editors of Utica newspapers. He also published visionary poems at his own expense. Blood discovered the "anaesthetic revelation," and believed that the deepest insight into reality came just as the individual consciousness takes flight under the influence of ether or some such anaesthetic. The illuminating moments so experienced led him to the formulation of a philosophy of the "Pluriverse," as opposed to our commonly accepted "Universe." "Certainty is the root of despair," Blood asserted. "The Inevitable stales, while doubt and hope are sisters. Not unfortunately the Universe is wild—game-flavoured as a hawk's wing. Nature is miracle all. She knows no laws: the same returns not, save to bring the different. ..." Blood's "Pluri-verse" was published in 1920, the year after his death: but his work and vision still await exhaustive examination.

If, too often, Blood wrote in the pedestrian measures of his own period, he succeeded at times in liberating himself from the network of current verbiage that hindered his flight into superconsciousness. Nor, as his "poetical Alphabet" demonstrates, was he without humor. Thus, independently of Rimbaud, he diagnosed the vowels, and wrote of the "Absurd genius of *U* flat":

"U, guttural, or flat, is a humorous savage, best described in his own words: a huge, lubberly, blundering dunderhead, a blubbering numskull and a dunce, ugly, sullen, dull, clumsy, rugged, gullible, glum, dumpish, lugubrious—a stumbler, mumbler, bungler, grumbler, jumbler—a grunter, thumper, tumbler, stunner—a drudge, a trudge; he lugs, tugs, sucks, juggles, and is up to all manner of bulls—a musty, fussy, crusty, disgusting brute. ..."

These homegrown eccentrics of ours are specimens all of the marginal consciousness, doughty defenders of the subjective from the regimented invasion and standardized error of the external world. It is fortunate for us that the spirit of Charles Hoy Fort lives on in his published work.*

This Socrates of the Bronx died in 1932. He was primarily a collector of newspaper clippings; out of these clippings, by a craft of literary *collage* and *montage*, Fort managed to project his picture of a paradoxical and highly unpredictable universe. He was a connoisseur of the incredible—a snatcher up of unconsidered, yet disconcerting, trifles—the alogical, the illogical, the analogical, the neological.

"We shall have a procession of data that Science has excluded," Charles Fort challenged. And so he marshals his army of incredible details—of snowflakes the size of saucers, of black rains, red rains, the fall of a thousand tons of butter, of jet-black snow, pink snow, blue hailstones, of hailstones with the flavor of oranges. In response to a query Charles Fort confessed his faith in "the oneness of allness." Furthermore:

"... we and all other appearances or phantasms in a superdream are expressions of one cosmic flow or graduation between them; one called disorder, unreality, inequilibrium, ugliness, discord, inconsistency; the other called order, realness, equilibrium, beauty, harmony, justice, truth. ..."

In the visual arts, the eccentric or subjective craftsman has been ridiculed and rejected by his contemporaries. One recalls immediately the case of Albert Ryder and the tardy acclamation of his genius; and more recently, that of Louis Eilshemius, who despite belated appreciation, passed so many years of his lonely life as a figure of ridicule. In the arts, as in other realms we have, on the whole, placed too high a value upon "standard equipment" and have too long remained inhospitable, to borrow the words of the poet, to "all things counter, original, spare, strange."

It is fortunate that a new spirit is emerging at last. Despite the exigencies of our hot, sputtering immediacy, this spirit recognizes the sanctity of expression in all forms, and values authenticity rather than empty professionalism. This spirit is no longer frightened by the expression of obsession and delusion. For without such compulsions,

↓ Pictured throughout the catalog, each "compensation portrait" represents an artist, named below each portrait, who participated in the exhibition. For example, a young boy stands in for Matta, and a laughing couple for Joan Miró.

Such adventurers are by no means alien newcomers to this continent. America has produced pioneers of the inward realm no less than of distant horizons. Old Cotton Mather himself published a book entitled "The Wonders of the Invisible World" which contains passages reminiscent of the diabolic visions of Hieronymus Bosch. Jonathan Edwards, in the middle of the eighteenth century, preached his famous sermon "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God," which literally had his listeners writhing in the aisles. Its power was generated by the inner compulsion of Jonathan's obsession, a compulsion that exploded like a bomb into fiery, devastating eloquence, which spread terror among the credulous. Some such obsessive power has been exercised by prophets and messiahs of all the egregious sects and cults which have proliferated upon this continent. The folklore and folk-art of such cults, from Mother Ann Lee and Joseph Smith to Father Divine, invites examination and preservation.

I have neither time nor space to touch more than superficially upon the endless procession of native eccentrics who have, in various media and arts, sought to project their obsessive vision of the invisible. Edgar Allan Poe springs most directly to mind—though without doubt the psychoanalysts and psychiatrists have picked this case to the bone. Poe is a superb example of "marginal" consciousness—the eternal rebel, Lucifer the fallen, diabolically possessed, driven to express his inner vision of a demonic universe. In Poe, everything is calculated and cryptographic, all motives are malefic. A sort of mephitic ether numbs the reader with this poet's specially concocted poison, in which state he senses the erotic obscenity, half-masked, in such lines as these—

"Well I know this dim lake of Auber,
This misty mid region of Weir:
Well I know this dank tarn of Auber,
This ghoul-haunted region of Weir."

Herman Melville is another giant who utilized the space-time symbols of the outward world to project the sombre vision of his sombre universe. In "Benito Cereno" he presents a vivid allegory of appearance and reality, puncturing the safe and sane assumptions of the "normal" vision. In the words of the victim, Don Benito, he points his moral:

"... you were with me all day; stood with me, sat with me, talked with me, looked at me, ate with me; and yet your last act was to clutch for a villain not only an innocent man, but the most pitiable of all men. To such degree may malign machinations and deceptions impose. So far may even the best man err, in judging the conduct of one with the recesses of whose condition he is not acquainted."

William James rescued from oblivion the obscure genius of Benjamin Paul Blood (1832–1919). Blood was a village philosopher of Amsterdam, New York, most of whose literary output consisted of letters addressed to the editors of Utica newspapers. He also published visionary poems at his own expense. Blood discovered the "anaesthetic revelation," and believed that the deepest insight into reality came just as the individual consciousness takes flight under the influence of ether or some such anaesthetic. The illuminating moments so experienced led him to the formulation of a philosophy of the "Pluriverse," as opposed to our commonly accepted "Universe." "Certainty is the root of despair," Blood asserted. "The Inevitable stales, while doubt and hope are sisters. Not unfortunately the Universe is wild—game-flavoured as a hawk's wing. Nature is miracle all. She knows no laws: the same returns not, save to bring the different. ..." Blood's "Pluri-verse" was published in 1920, the year after his death: but his work and vision still await exhaustive examination.

If, too often, Blood wrote in the pedestrian measures of his own period, he succeeded at times in liberating himself from the network of current verbiage that hindered his flight into superconsciousness. Nor, as his "poetical Alphabet" demonstrates, was he without humor. Thus, independently of Rimbaud, he diagnosed the vowels, and wrote of the "Absurd genius of *U* flat":

"U, guttural, or flat, is a humorous savage, best described in his own words: a huge, lubberly, blundering dunderhead, a blubbering numskull and a dunce, ugly, sullen, dull, clumsy, rugged, gullible, glum, dumpish, lugubrious—a stumbler, mumbler, bungler, grumbler, jumbler—a grunter, thumper, tumbler, stunner—a drudge, a trudge; he lugs, tugs, sucks, juggles, and is up to all manner of bulls—a musty, fussy, crusty, disgusting brute. ..."

These homegrown eccentrics of ours are specimens all of the marginal consciousness, doughty defenders of the subjective from the regimented invasion and standardized error of the external world. It is fortunate for us that the spirit of Charles Hoy Fort lives on in his published work.*

This Socrates of the Bronx died in 1932. He was primarily a collector of newspaper clippings; out of these clippings, by a craft of literary *collage* and *montage*, Fort managed to project his picture of a paradoxical and highly unpredictable universe. He was a connoisseur of the incredible—a snatcher up of unconsidered, yet disconcerting, trifles—the alogical, the illogical, the analogical, the neological.

"We shall have a procession of data that Science has excluded," Charles Fort challenged. And so he marshals his army of incredible details—of snowflakes the size of saucers, of black rains, red rains, the fall of a thousand tons of butter, of jet-black snow, pink snow, blue hailstones, of hailstones with the flavor of oranges. In response to a query Charles Fort confessed his faith in "the oneness of allness." Furthermore:

"... we and all other appearances or phantasms in a superdream are expressions of one cosmic flow or graduation between them; one called disorder, unreality, inequilibrium, ugliness, discord, inconsistency; the other called order, realness, equilibrium, beauty, harmony, justice, truth. ..."

In the visual arts, the eccentric or subjective craftsman has been ridiculed and rejected by his contemporaries. One recalls immediately the case of Albert Ryder and the tardy acclamation of his genius; and more recently, that of Louis Eilshemius, who despite belated appreciation, passed so many years of his lonely life as a figure of ridicule. In the arts, as in other realms we have, on the whole, placed too high a value upon "standard equipment" and have too long remained inhospitable, to borrow the words of the poet, to "all things counter, original, spare, strange."

It is fortunate that a new spirit is emerging at last. Despite the exigencies of our hot, sputtering immediacy, this spirit recognizes the sanctity of expression in all forms, and values authenticity rather than empty professionalism. This spirit is no longer frightened by the expression of obsession and delusion. For without such compulsions,

bereft of fire and vitality, expression dies.

We have but to use our own eyes, cultivate our own emerging powers of observation, to make our own discoveries of significant eccentrics. Some may be re-discoveries from a more or less forgotten past; others may be hidden in strange out-of-the-way places or pages. I myself have long wondered why some enterprising editor or publisher has never "discovered" the talent of Clark Ashton Smith. I came by chance upon his black bitter humor in the pages of a pulp-paper magazine devoted to quasi-scientific fiction. Clark Ashton Smith writes of interplanetary exploration—the common matter of such publications—but he possesses a power to transmute this base material into an imaginative and humorous allegory of human aspirations. Three explorers of the outer universe rocket through space so swiftly that they seem not to be moving at all. Overcome by the monotony of the speedless speed which seemed to be motionless, two of these adventurers murder their companion, and cast the body from the rocket-plane. There it floats and follows them with accusing immobility—since the plane itself is the only body exerting any gravitational pull in that vast emptiness!

Maybe here is a fable for the rest of us. In our frenzied rocketing through time and space, we too, may have cast out the misunderstood visionary from our midst. But he too belongs to our common humanity. However evident his eccentricity may appear to our eyes, let us not forget that self-propitiation does not in itself insure immunity from self-deception.

* *The Book of Charles Fort.* Published for the Fortean Society by Henry Holt and Company, New York: 1941.

"'Surrealism Gets Nearer: The Old Whitelaw Reid Mansion Is Invaded by Modernists"

[excerpt]

HENRY MCBRIDE

New York Sun — 16 October 1942

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To have engaged both Marcel Duchamp and Sandy Calder to assist in installing the Surrealist Show in the old Whitelaw Reid mansion on Madison Avenue at 51st street was certainly clever of André Breton, the instigator of this benefit for French prisoners in German war camps and children in Unoccupied France.

The mere idea of such a show in such a place is enough to arouse the living and to stir the dead. How uneasily the vanished members of the Reid family must have twisted in their graves on Wednesday evening, when the show opened . . .

For, give Marcell Duchamp a bit of string and a public to shock, and there are no lengths to which he will not go. In this case, it seems, he used sixteen miles of string. Actually! From end to end the once grand drawing room is festooned with stout cobwebs of string and as though Surrealism were not in itself hard enough to understand, in this instance the cobwebs one is obliged to peer through make it doubly difficult.

In fact, I am not certain but that this installation and the strangeness off the house itself, packed as it is with war material, far outrun the pictures off Surrealism. The mansion, one of the few remaining palaces of the capitalistic period, should be preserved in its entirety for a posterity which certainly would not believe it from a mere description. Here's hoping that it will be!

Pictures by De Chirico confront you as you enter the room and they present such concrete images to the mind that they linger in your head long after the vaguer efforts at Surrealism have been resolved into a tapestry of dreams. But make no mistake about the exhibition. In it the subconscious has been given a thorough going-over and such specialists in the fantastic as Sandy Calder, Miró, Max Ernst, Matta, Yves Tanguy, Picasso, Robert Motherwell, Matisse and Paul Klee illuminate all the subterranean passages of the human soul. Even Marcel Duchamp, who is as shy with the public as the late Lawrence of Arabia used to be, contributes a hitherto unshown canvas. It nestles behind a particularly thick wad of cobwebs but it can be seen to be peculiar.

"'Inner Vision' and Out of Bounds; Sidelights and Afterthoughts on the Rise of the Surrealist School and Its Limitations—Other New Exhibitions"

[excerpt]

EDWARD ALDEN JEWELL

New York Times — 18 October 1942

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You will find an extremely interesting essay by Robert Allerton Parker in the handbook prepared for the Surrealist exhibition, now being held as a benefit for the Coordinating Council of French Relief Societies at this organization's headquarters in the old Whitelaw Reid mansion, 451 Madison Avenue. The title of this essay is "Explorers of the Pluriverse." Mr. Parker adroitly packs into the first paragraph the gist of his thesis, which afterward embodies a very considerable marshaling of curious fact interlarded with pertinent comment.

He tells us:

> The "realist" polishes his lenses to capture the fleeting aspects of the external world. He prides himself upon the soundness and sanity of his vision. The totality of that objective world he never doubts. But there are others: they cultivate the inner vision, abandon the paved highway of standardized points of view, brave the quicksands of non-conformity and seek their own path through the jungle of subjectivity. For artists of this type, no less than seers and poets, the external world provides no more than the symbols and alphabet of communication, and the "field" into which they may project their visions.

There is only one trouble here; one aspect that might prove misleading. Mr. Parker, admirably precise and clear in presenting his case for the Surrealists, seems to imply that Surrealists are the only artists who "cultivate the inner vision"; the only "seers and poets" for whom the external world exists as a sheaf of symbols rather than a token of "totality."

Perhaps he did not intend that his thesis should be as restrictive as it appears. Perhaps he will be willing to concede that our Surrealists bespeak only one facet of the "inner vision," and that there are many, many artists, not Surrealist in any connotation of the term, who "seek their path through the jungle of subjectivity," who shun "standardized points of view," and for whom the nonconformist attitude holds no terror.

WHAT IS SURREALISM?

The show, installed in what used to be Whitelaw Reid's drawing room and in adjacent rooms of his Florentine palazzo of the Eighteen Eighties, constitutes a very diverting and flavorsome event. The décor is phrased in just the unexpected sort of labyrinthine wit that we should expect from Marcel Duchamp, who has engagingly entangled this miniature Surrealist "pluriverse" in sixteen miles of innocent white string. No use trying in a matter-of-fact way to describe what he has accomplished. The net result, geometrical at least by implication, in its interlacing and festooning, is appropriately weird and devious. It forever gets between you and the assembled art, and in so doing creates the most paradoxically clarifying barrier imaginable.

But if this ingenious investiture of Duchamp's clarifies the present occasion by so pervasively enmeshing it in a shroud of irrational logic, it also helps make imperative one's effort to determine just what Surrealism really is; how inclusive and to what extent exclusive is its empire; whether "inner vision" and diabolically serpentine wit are, ipso facto, interchangeable terms.

SURREALISM TODAY

Isolated examples of so-called Surrealist art may often provide inconclusive testimony. They may seem to involve a preponderance of this or of that without raising a clear-cut issue. But when a bang-up ensemble is provided, such as the affair you must on no account miss, one may seem confronted with values more explicitly defined.

I do not propose to probe the question and examine the evidence exhaustively at this writing. Nor do I wish in the slightest measure to pontificate. It remains true, I think, as Mr. Barr remarked in his introduction to the catalogue for the "Fantastic Art, Dada and Surrealism" show at the Museum of Modern Art in 1936, that while "we can describe the contemporary movement toward an art of the marvelous irrational, *** we are still too close to it to evaluate it." In Mr. Barr's opinion, "when the movement is no longer a cause or a cockpit of controversy, it will doubtless be seen to have produced a mass of mediocre and capricious pictures and objects, a fair number of excellent and enduring works of art and even a few masterpieces."

That the original modern Surrealist movement grew out of Dada we know. Dada is supposed officially to have expired in about the year 1922 and Surrealism to have risen, Phoenix-like, from its ashes. I have often thought, however, that the news of Dada's demise, like that of Mark Twain's, was greatly exaggerated. I think that Dada lives on in Surrealism, or at any rate that its ghost has been tremendously active. Perhaps a high percentage of what we now call Surrealism could quite properly be called Dada instead.

There appears, however, to be a rather salient difference, for whereas Dada was animated by a true and even, in its way, a profound political motivation, the art of this category that we see produced now is merely a kind of academic exercise, exploiting over and over again superficial aspects and having no roots in more creatively summoned experience.

CLEVER AND ADAPTABLE

The same, in a general sense, would be true of Surrealism today. Save with respect to a few genuinely creative artists, contemporary Surrealism seems just a matter of academic cleverness. Its decorative potentialities are coming more and more to be recognized, and its adaptability with respect to other fields, such as that of the ballet. "Automatism" may still be actively operative. But I suspect that most of our Surrealists would do well not to talk too much about Freud any more, just as I am certain that Surrealists never held any copyright on man's "subconscious" or "unconscious."

Our Surrealists persist in speaking very reverently of "predecessors" such as Blake and Goya and Piranesi and Meryon and Redon and Ryder and Baudelaire and Edgar Allan Poe. Yet I venture to suggest that every one of these pilgrims of the Unseen would feel ill at ease today in Marcel Duchamp's witty labyrinth of string.

True "inner vision" has always seemed to me something else. On the other hand, the "fantastic" can always prove enjoyable when it is spun with real artistry—the more enjoyable if it be content to remain in its own sufficient sphere and does not attempt to usurp the prerogatives of those who are equipped to explore the deep places of the human spirit.

On a technical count, much contemporary Surrealist expression in painting is superb. That in itself, especially when fine craft is allied with imaginative opulence, is a great asset indeed, and may be more important in the long run than the wish to persuade us that Surrealism is psychiatry set to immortal music of line and color. . . .

"Agonized Humor"

ANONYMOUS

Newsweek — New York, 26 October 1942

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On canvas a blue fish flies through the air playing a violin, a monster-man sprouts two eyes and two noses, and disembodied spirits disport themselves. Their inappropriate background is the old-fashioned elegance of the former Whitelaw Reid mansion on Madison Avenue in Manhattan, home of the Coordinating Council of French Relief Societies. It was there last week that the leaders of Surrealism, transplanted almost in a body from Paris to this country with elaborate fanfare opened the biggest all-Surrealist show ever seen in the United States.

The two ringmasters who arranged it are André Breton, the group's leader and theoretician, and Marcel Duchamp, whose famous *Nude Descending the Staircase* was part of the Armory Show of 1913 that helped shock America into a consciousness of modern art. Duchamp hasn't painted in twenty years; he spends most of his time playing chess and writing books about it. But he made the show's chef d'oeuvre: a fantastic labyrinth in the main exhibition room, woven from 16 miles of string and intertwined with the crystal chandeliers. It was intended to "combat the background," which it does effectively.

Breton, primarily a poet, doesn't paint either. But he fashions what the Surrealists call *objets*—framed collections of assorted articles such as the one he calls *A Torn Stocking*, composed of spools and strands of thread, twigs, cigarettes, leaves, a watch, etc.

Among the other 40 artists are such old masters of the group as Max Ernst, André Masson, Ives Tanguy, and Matta as well as many lesser lights and such famous part-time Surrealists as Picasso. The central canvas, Ernst's *Surrealism in Painting*, pictures a monster bird sketching with a man's hand while it looks the other way, coddling its young in a nest. "We like to paint as we dream," explains Ernst, "without control and complete freedom. When I start to

paint something I don't know what I do. Afterward I can interpret it."

The chief absentee is Salvador Dalí. Several years ago the Surrealists expelled that master exhibitionist from their group because they believed he had sold the movement down the river in order to make money for himself. They scornfully refer to him in their writings nowadays as Avida Dollars.

The Surrealists-in-exile are no longer the wild-eyed youths of Paris who made public scandals, slapped people on the streets, and yelled in the theater. They are now kindly looking middle-aged men who have settled down considerably and are happy enough in New York—except for missing Les Deux Magots, the sidewalk café which was their Paris hangout.

And as to the public's idea that in all this the Surrealists might be poking fun at them, one young disciple put it this way: "They're all in deadly earnest. If it's humor, it's a kind of agonized humor."

"The Art Galleries: Sixteen Miles of String" [excerpt]
ROBERT M. COATES
New Yorker — 31 October 1942

In addition to the paintings, sculptures, collages, constructions, and other objects being displayed at the big Surrealist show now on in the galleries of the Coordinating Council of French Relief Societies, there are, so a publicity release informs me, some sixteen miles of string. Woven back and forth and around the room in a kind of crazy entanglement, the string is used to make a winding lane, or maze, through which one must pass to view the pictures, and I mention this because it seems to me that the item is a tipoff on the whole present status of European Surrealism. Novel as the string idea is, it has its elements of tedium as well. Just stretching all that stuff from one support to another, and then back, and then on again, must have been a weary and repetitive business. However fresh and high-spirited the concoctors of the notion may have been when they started the job, they must have been pretty well tired of it by the time they finished, and my point is that much the same can be said of the "official" Surrealist movement. That, too, has grown tired and tedious and a little repetitive.

It's no accident, I think, that in the current collection the quality of the work increases almost uniformly as one goes back toward the beginnings of the movement and that the early Chiricos (*Le Duo*, *Intérieur Metaphysique*) and the René Magrittes (*The Path of the Air*, etc.) stand forth as the most completely satisfying pieces there, while the more recent work lies generally on a far lower creative level. This isn't true in all instances, naturally. There are still men of inventive mind connected with the school—Max Ernst, André Masson, Matta, Miró, and so on—and the majority of these are well represented. Matta has his scintillating *La Terre est un Homme* on view, Masson his grandiose *Meditations on an Oak Leaf*, and Ernst a canvas called *Marriage of Light and Darkness*, which is in his best mood of bland and devious nightmare. With the exception of Ernst, though, the work of these men seems to take them more and more out of the scope of the movement (note, for instance, how close to pure abstraction Matta's painting is), and the school's lesser figures content themselves with devout, unimaginative imitation. The fact is that Surrealism, in the "school" sense at least, has hardly advanced an inch since it started, and the devices perfected by its first great practitioner, Chirico—the use of pictorial metaphor, incongruity, and the free association of symbols—still remain its most important contribution to modern art.

I haven't yet conveyed the real flavor of the exhibition, which, in spite of the vast amount of junk it contains, is remarkably lively and colorful. One great value of the affair, I think, is its inclusiveness. In addition to the well-known artists already cited, there are others less familiar in this country, and a number of them show works of surprisingly high quality. Richard Oelze's paradoxical *Archaic Fragment*, Esteban Francis's *Arrangez-Vous*, and Wifredo Lam's portentous *L'Ame Extérieur* are among the pieces in this category worth searching out, and Laurence Vail contributes a set of objects *en collage* that are exquisitely delicate in workmanship. . . .

"The Passing Shows" [excerpt]
ANONYMOUS
ARTnews — New York, 1 November 1942

. . . Surrealism is a word which, like Communism, has lost its terrors for the average person today. It may not be every man's medicine, but by and large we admit its right to exist and admire its accomplishments. Therefore to campaign for Surrealism via the shocking technique is to turn back the clock by nearly twenty years. Certainly in New York City there have been enough avant-garde shows to persuade the gallery-goer that great pictures like Picasso's *Femmes au bords de la mer* or Chagall's *À la Russie* don't have to be snarled up in publicity and sixteen miles of string to get themselves looked at. We refer to the current exhibition at the Coordinating Council of French Relief Societies in the *ancienne maison* Whitelaw Reid on Madison Avenue, with a cross reference to Peggy Guggenheim's newly opened "Art of This Century" installation on West 57th Street.

Both shows contain admirable works though the first-mentioned is tied up with what appears to us inexcusable *chichi* for a warring world, including a catalogue as dated and stale as the bisquit samples Chirico was painting in the early 20s. Once again Victorianisms, double exposure photographs, and the art of the insane is trotted out. What on the strength of the pictures alone should have been exciting has been turned into something stuffy. Encouraging note for those who still believe that Surrealism must give offense to the bourgeoisie at all costs: while we were in the exhibition a lady and her umbrella successfully tangled with some of those sixteen miles of string. . . .

20

Art of This Century

New York, 1942

LOCATION AND DATES
Installation of Peggy Guggenheim's permanent collection,
Art of This Century, 30 West 57th Street, New York,
20 October 1942–31 May 1947

CURATORS
Peggy Guggenheim, Frederick Kiesler

ITINERARY
None

ARTISTS
Berenice Abbott, Alexander Archipenko, Hans Arp, Giacomo Balla, Hans Bellmer, Constantin Brancusi, Georges Braque, Victor Brauner, André Breton, Alexander Calder, Leonora Carrington, Marc Chagall, Giorgio de Chirico, Joseph Cornell, Salvador Dalí, Robert Delaunay, Paul Delvaux, Theo van Doesburg, César Domela-Nieuwenhuis, Oscar Domínguez, Marcel Duchamp, Raymond Duchamp-Villon, Jimmy Ernst, Max Ernst, John Ferren, Leonor Fini, Baroness Elsa von Freytag-Loringhoven, Naum Gabo, Alberto Giacometti, Albert Gleizes, Juan Gris, Raoul Hausmann, Stanley William Hayter, Jean Hélion, Morris Hirshfield, Charles Howard, Wassily Kandinsky, Paul Klee, Wifredo Lam, Henri Laurens, Fernand Léger, Jacques Lipchitz, El Lissitzky, René Magritte, Kasimir Malevich, Louis Marcoussis, André Masson, Matta, Jean Metzinger, Joan Miró, Piet Mondrian, Henry Moore, Ben Nicholson, Richard Oelze, Amédée Ozenfant, Wolfgang Paalen, Antoine Pevsner, Francis Picabia, Pablo Picasso, Man Ray, Kurt Schwitters, Kurt Seligmann, Gino Severini, Yves Tanguy, Sophie Täuber-Arp, John Tunnard, Lawrence Vail, Georges Vantongerloo, Jacques Villon, Friedrich Vordemberge-Gildewart

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rréalisme," the modes of display embodied the formal
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ned both to present Peggy Guggenheim's collection
provide a venue for new work, Art of This Century
European masters who had come to New York during
g Americans who would succeed them.
42 and closing its doors five years later, this gallery/
f three permanent installations and a space for
. Guggenheim devoted her two main galleries to
ealism, her dual commitment symbolized in the earrings
ng—one an Alexander Calder mobile and the other
es Tanguy. Seeking to break down the barrier between
, Kiesler eliminated frames on the paintings and created
The gallery devoted to Cubism and abstraction was
ment with floor-to-ceiling adjustable supports, dark
s walls, and a floor painted turquoise. For the Surrealist
space of curved gumwood walls, from which paintings
ts that allowed for variable angles and heights of
etic gallery, small pieces by Paul Klee were mounted
at was triggered by a light beam, items from Marcel
e museum of his own work were shown through a
ject-poem" by André Breton was revealed by operating
Kiesler's innovative installations, however, were upstaged
roblems delayed the opening of Art of This Century
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ARTnews – New

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COLLECTION CATALOG

Art of This Century: Objects—Drawings—Photographs—Paintings—Sculpture—Collages 1910–1942. Edited and foreword by Peggy Guggenheim; prefaces by Hans Arp, André Breton, and Piet Mondrian; Futurist manifesto by Giacomo Balla, Umberto Boccioni, Carlo Carrà, Luigi Russolo, and Gino Severini; essays by Max Ernst, Naum Gabo and Antoine Pevsner, and Ben Nicholson. New York: Art Aid Corporation, 1942.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Number of artists: c. 70
Number of works: c. 175
Total attendance: unknown

In the 1920 "First International Dada Fair" and the 1938 "Exposition Internationale du Surréalisme," the modes of display embodied the formal and emotional aspects of the artwork. Frederick Kiesler—already an innovative exhibition designer when he immigrated to New York in 1926—created the classic example of this type of display in the galleries of Art of This Century. Designed both to present Peggy Guggenheim's collection of modern art and to provide a venue for new work, Art of This Century brought together the European masters who had come to New York during the war and the young Americans who would succeed them.

Opening in 1942 and closing its doors five years later, this gallery/museum consisted of three permanent installations and a space for changing exhibitions. Guggenheim devoted her two main galleries to abstraction and Surrealism, her dual commitment symbolized in the earrings she wore at the opening—one an Alexander Calder mobile and the other a tiny painting by Yves Tanguy. Seeking to break down the barrier between audience and artwork, Kiesler eliminated frames on the paintings and created interactive displays. The gallery devoted to Cubism and abstraction was a geometrical environment with floor-to-ceiling adjustable supports, dark blue stretched-canvas walls, and a floor painted turquoise. For the Surrealist works he designed a space of curved gumwood walls, from which paintings protruded on supports that allowed for variable angles and heights of presentation. In a kinetic gallery, small pieces by Paul Klee were mounted on a conveyor belt that was triggered by a light beam, items from Marcel Duchamp's miniature museum of his own work were shown through a peephole, and an "object-poem" by André Breton was revealed by operating a mechanical shutter. Kiesler's innovative installations, however, were upstaged when construction problems delayed the opening of Art of This Century until 20 October. By then, Duchamp's striking web of string had already grabbed public attention at the opening of "First Papers of Surrealism."

MISS PEGGY GUGGENHEIM

invites you to attend the opening of

ART OF THIS CENTURY

at 30 West 57th Street, New York, N. Y.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 20th, 1942

From 8.00 P. M. until Midnight

Admission
$1.00 per person

For the Benefit of
The American Red Cross

THIS INVITATION WILL ADMIT TWO (2) PERSONS

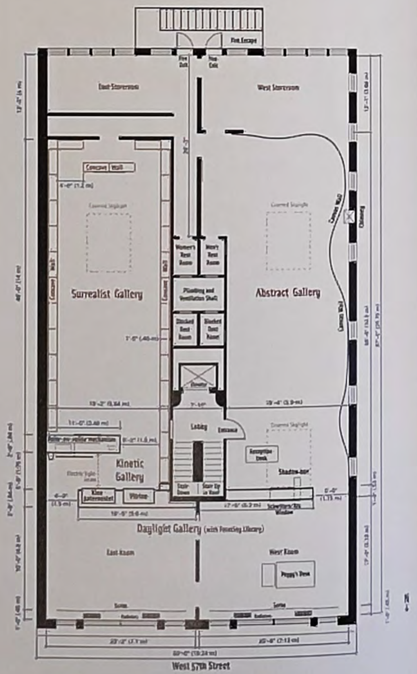
↑ Invitation to the opening of Art of This Century, Peggy Guggenheim's gallery, 20 October 1942.

↗ Art of This Century, 30 West 57th Street, New York (third building from left), c. 1940. The gallery occupied the top floor of a seven-story building.

→ Reconstructed floor plan, Art of This Century. The Surrealist, Abstract, and Kinetic Galleries displayed Peggy Guggenheim's permanent collection, and the Daylight Galley was used for temporary exhibitions. (Reconstructed floor plan by Dan Quaintance.)

↗↗ "Press Release pertaining to the Architectural Aspects of the Gallery," by Frederick Kiesler, c. 20 October 1942.

→→ Press release, "Peggy Guggenheim to open Art Gallery 'Art of this Century,'" c. 20 October 1942.



Press Release pertaining to the Architectural Aspects of the Gallery.

"Art Of This Century", divided into four galleries, has been designed by Frederick J. Kiesler. He is an American citizen and has lived in this country since 1926. The "Little Review" and the Theater Guild invited him to come to the U.S.A. to construct the "Exhibition of International Theater Technique" for the opening of Steinway Hall in New York. He is now Director of the Laboratory of the School of Architecture at Columbia University, and Scenic Director at the Juilliard School of Music.

The architectural features of the four galleries of Miss Guggenheim's "Art of this Century" are as follows:

1. All installations are mobile and demountable. This applies to walls, partitions, mechanics as well as lighting equipments.

2. All construction and equipment have been converted into such material methods as are ruled by the laws of priorities, a minimum of expense, shortage of labor help and easy managing of the gallery.

3. A new system of co-ordinating architecture with painting and sculpture and their co-ordination to the spectator has been attempted. This new correlation system is a method of "spatial exhibition", inaugurated by Kiesler in 1924 in Vienna and followed through in Paris 1925, and in New York in 1926, 1933 and 1937 at Columbia University. His spatial-exhibition method somewhat in not using walls for hanging pictures or for placing pedestals for sculptures, but of a free arrangement of these objects throughout the space available, using, from a technical point of view, various methods of cantilever and suspension construction. One of the main features of such spatial-exhibitions is the necessity of eliminating all frames. The result achieved - contrary to one's expectation - seems to be a much better possibility for concentrating the attention of the spectator on each painting and therefor a better chance for the painting to communicate its message.

4. Improvements in lighting have been attempted especially in one of the permanent galleries where the indirect lighting can be controlled for each painting individually. In all galleries, however, the color, intensity and diffusion of light here been correlated in a new manner, namely, by planning the reflection coefficient of all the surfaces of the room in color as well as in volume and their combined effect upon the paintings.

5. In the daylight gallery, actually a painting library, the spectator has a chance of sitting in front of mobile stands and to adjust himself each painting to angles best suited for his own studying, also to exchange some of them from a built-in storage.

-2-

6. Special attention was given to solve the problem of fatigue during the visit to a gallery. Three types of mobile seats have been constructed; a) a light weight portable folding chair with back, b) a type of recliner, and, c) a seven cup-unit which can be used for resting, and, if necessary, for attaching paintings and sculptures in order to save additional expenses of seats or partitions for larger exhibition materials.

7. The surrealist gallery uses curved walls all throughout from which special arms are protruding, carrying paintings, inclined in a manner, which permits the visitor to study them better, either seating or standing. The curvature of these walls, in combination with planned lighting, also aims at a better spatial relationship between architecture, paintings, sculptures and the spectators.

8. In another gallery triangular suspension columns are used for the fastening of paintings, the number of which can easily be increased or their location changed, according to the desirability of the exhibition materials.

9. The fourth gallery is devoted to an automatic method of showing paintings. There is a paternoster for paintings of Paul Klee which provides for automatic release of these paintings, the control of which is in the hands of the visitor. A similar method applies to a spiral wheel which shows in a continual flow 14 most important paintings and designs of special reproductions of Marcel Duchamp. Both methods were conceived to add more display space within a small area.

These are some of the major features. Plans for the galleries and for the equipment of "Art of this Century", were finished in April, 1942; since then till the opening, all construction has been worked out in small shops in the New York area, with their distinct help to carry through the actual remodeling in these difficult times to the point of often sacrificing their financial profits. In that respect — no matter what the success of the enterprise may be — these galleries represent the result of a splendid co-operation between the workmen, the owner and the designer.

ART OF THIS CENTURY 30 West 57th Street, CI 6-0037, New York, N.Y.

PRESS RELEASE for immediate release

Peggy Guggenheim to open Art Gallery "Art of this Century"

Peggy Guggenheim announces the opening of her Art Gallery "Art of this Century" on October 21st, 1942 at 30 West 57th Street, New York City.

In 19__ Miss Guggenheim established an Art Gallery in London and began to collect modern works of art. Towards the end of 1939 she went to Paris where she decided to save as many paintings and sculptures as possible from the threatening Germans and bring them to America. The collection, representing examples of all 20th Century Pioneer Art Movements, arrived in America in July and December of 1941 after an escape from Europe during which it had to be disguised at times as household-goods, was hidden in a chateau near Vichy and sheltered for six months by the Mines de Gremolle. Miss Guggenheim continued to add new important works to her collection here in America and it is today regarded as the finest private collection of its kind. Artists from 16 countries, France, England, Spain, Czechoslovakia, U.S.A., Germany, Italy, Russia, Greece, Poland, Switzerland, Holland, Belgium, Chile, Argentina, and Roumania give ample evidence of the broad scope of the collection, which include such famous names as: Arp, Brancusi, Breton, Braque, Calder, Chagall, Chirico, Duchamp, Max Ernst, Gris, Kandinsky, Klee, Leger, Lipchitz, Magritte, Masson, Miro, Mondrian, Oscanfant, Picabia, Picasso, Tanguy and others.

After long and careful preparations and necessary research work the collection will now be shown at "Art of this Century" where it will serve as a basis as well as a background for changing exhibitions of individuals and groups. Frederick J. Kiesler designed the galleries in four distinct parts. The Cubist and abstract paintings and sculptures will be exhibited in Gallery 1 while the surrealist paintings, sculptures and objects will be shown in Gallery 2 and 3.

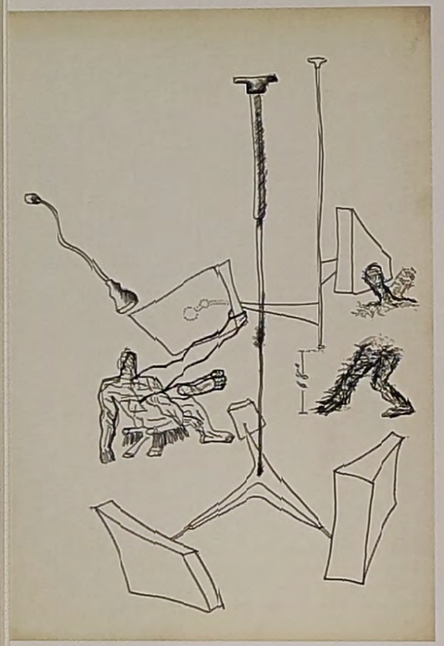
-3-

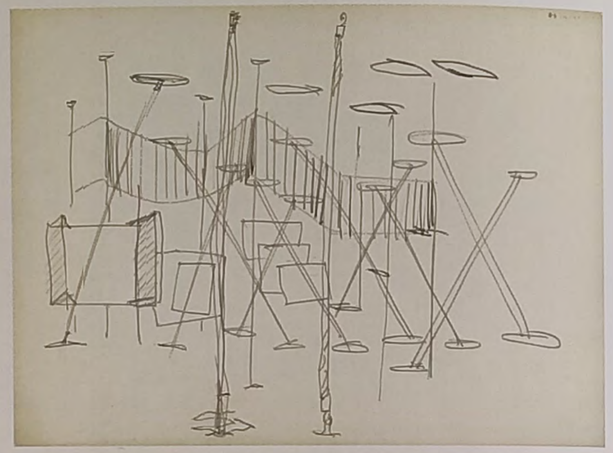
Gallery 4 has been reserved for changing exhibitions as well as a yearly salon of young artists creating in America and elsewhere. In designing the galleries Mr. Kiesler has executed his ideas and plans in an entirely new way of presenting paintings and sculptures. The paintings for example will be shown without frames and appear to be suspended in midair.

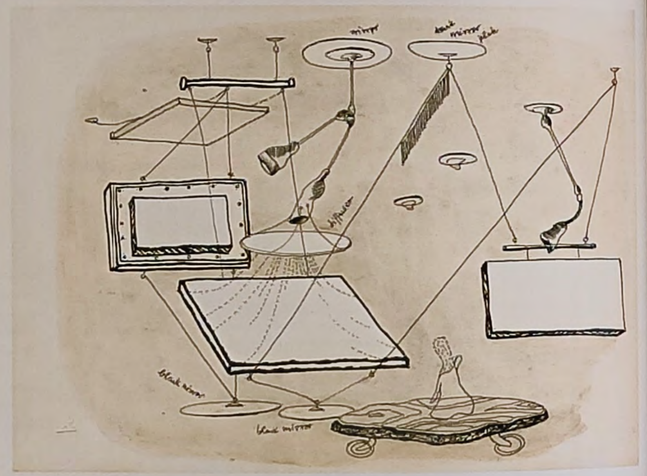
Miss Guggenheim hopes that "Art of this Century" will become a center where artists will be welcome and where they can feel that they are cooperating in establishing a research laboratory for new ideas. In an explanation in regard to the aims of her gallery Miss Guggenheim comments:

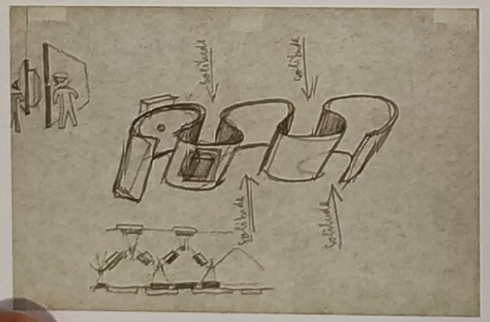
> Opening this Gallery and its collection in the public during a time when people are fighting for their lives and freedom is a responsibility of which I am fully conscious. This undertaking will serve its purpose only if it succeeds in serving the future instead of recording the past.

Art of this Century will open on Wednesday, October 21st, 1942 and will be open to the public daily except Sundays from 10 A.M. to 6 P.M. and on Tuesdays from 10 A.M. to 10 P.M. Admission is free at all times.









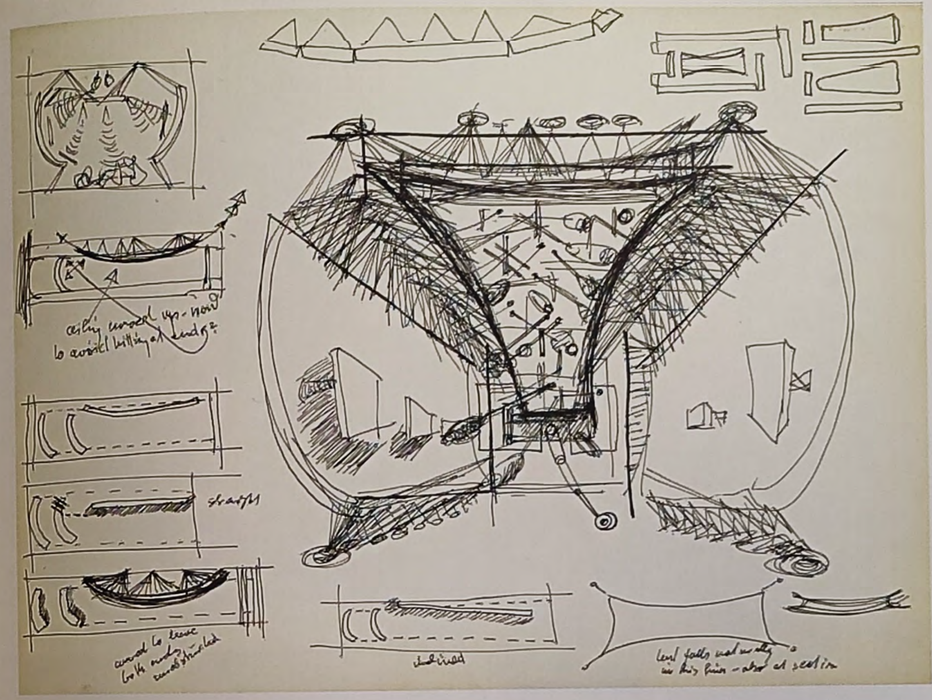
Studies for Abstract Gallery, Frederick Kiesler, 1942.

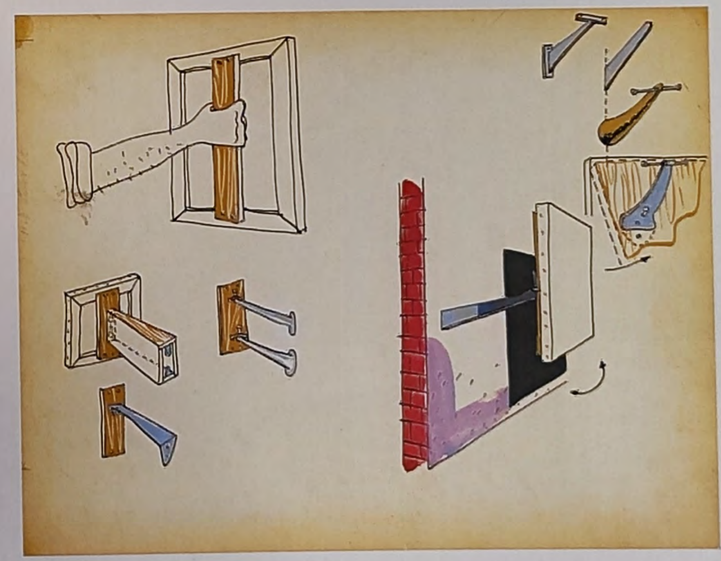
↖ Detail of the installation and lighting. Kiesler explored the angle of an artwork in relation to a viewer's various postures (left), and a three-armed hanging system (center) for the presentation of paintings.

↑↑ Floor-to-ceiling painting suspensions.

↑ Installation and lighting integrating black mirrors on the floor and ceiling.

← An early sketch depicting works of art installed directly on an undulating canvas wall; this hanging method was not implemented in the final design. Kiesler also envisioned small areas for contemplation between the curves of the stretched canvas.

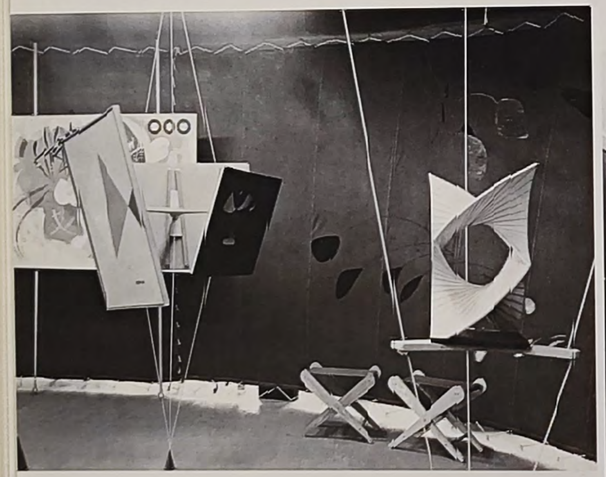




Studies for Surrealist Gallery, Frederick Kiesler, 1942.

↑ Detail of the ceiling and lighting system. Kiesler sketched several ceiling variations—curved, flat, and inclined (left and bottom). The main center portion of the drawing illustrates the effects of both floor and ceiling illumination.

→ Detail of Surrealist Gallery painting supports. Kiesler devised a hinged support, modeled after a human arm, to allow art to be installed at optimal angles.



Installation views, Abstract Gallery.

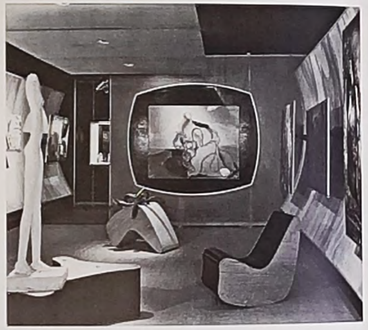
← The dominant architectural elements consisted of a sinuous ultramarine canvas wall and a floor-to-ceiling suspension system for abstract and Cubist paintings and sculptures. Berenice Abbott, whose work was in Guggenheim's collection, took many installation photographs of the gallery.

↙↙ Variations in the angle and height of paintings were achieved by a triangular hanging apparatus, as seen in the grouping of three paintings (center, left), two of which are visible: *Composition No. 113* by Friedrich Vordemberge-Gildewart (left) and *Prefiguration* by Charles Howard (right). A wooden three-armed plank suspended from ropes accommodated three-dimensional objects, such as *Developable Surface* by Antoine Pevsner (right). Wassily Kandinsky's *Dominant Curve* (background, far left) was installed almost flush against the canvas, and Alexander Calder's *Arc of Petals* hung from the ceiling (center).

↙ Rather than using natural light, Kiesler covered the existing skylights and used a J-shaped band of fluorescent lighting to illuminate works such as *No. 2* by Fernand Léger (third from left) and Georges Vantongerloo's sculpture *Construction of Volumetric Interrelationships . . .* (center).

↗ Kandinsky's *White Cross* (far right) and other works were installed using a slightly different method—a V-shaped pair of cloth strips. Kiesler also incorporated his Correalist Instruments, biomorphic designs that functioned as chairs, displays for paintings, and sculpture pedestals. Turned on its side, a Correalist Instrument was used for the display of Pevsner's *Anchored Cross* (left).

→ In yet a different mode of installation, Kiesler mounted frameless paintings on vertical cloth straps.



Installation views, Surrealist Gallery.

←←← Frederick Kiesler and an unidentified journalist (probably Emily Genauer, *New York World-Telegram*) in front of Max Ernst's *The Kiss*.

←← Peggy Guggenheim seated in a Correalist Rocker.

← Detail of Kiesler's adjustable wooden painting supports.

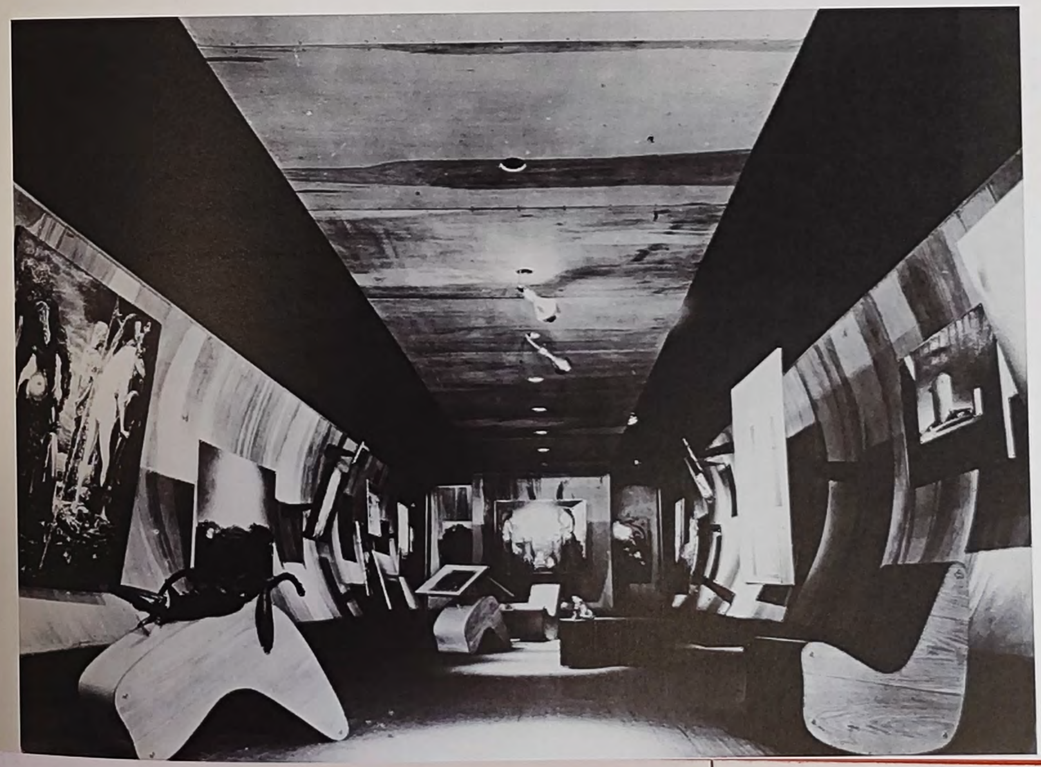
↙ Peggy Guggenheim and Max Ernst in front of two of his works: *The Kiss* and *Zoomorphic Couple*.

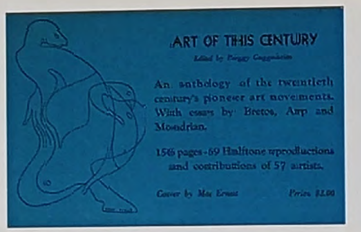
↙ Installation view showing Alberto Giacometti's *Walking Woman* (left) installed on Correalist Instrument.

↙↙ Paintings installed on inverted Correalist Rockers.

→ The Surrealist Gallery featured concave walls made of gumwood, intermittent spotlighting of artworks, and the sound effects of a passing train. As in the Abstract Gallery, Correalist Instruments and Rockers functioned both as seating and a means of exhibiting sculptures and paintings.

↓ Works in this gallery included Giacometti's sculpture *Woman with Her Throat Cut* (left foreground), Ernst's *The Antipope* and *The Entire City* (far left), Paul Delvaux's *The Break of Day* (center rear wall), Pablo Picasso's *The Studio* (second from right), and Giorgio de Chirico's *The Red Tower* (far right).

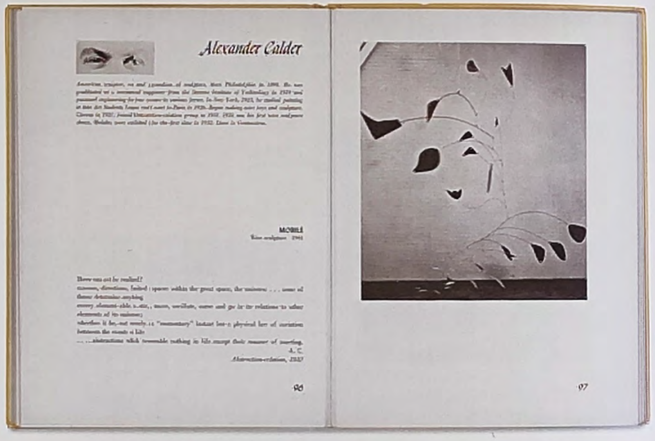


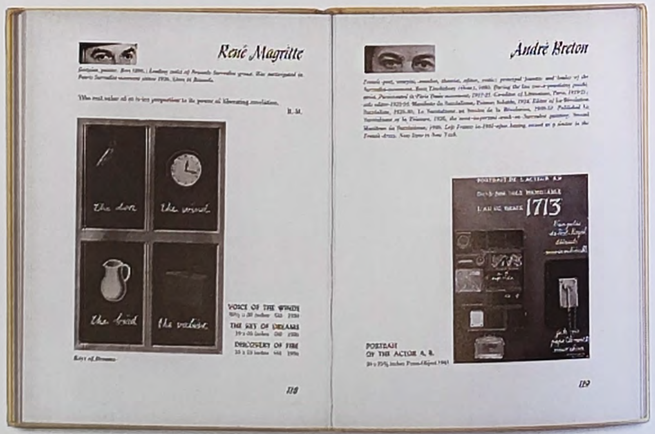

ART OF THIS CENTURY
Edited by Peggy Guggenheim
An anthology of the twentieth century's pioneer art movements. With essays by Breton, Arp and Mondrian.
156 pages - 69 Halftone reproductions and contributions of 57 artists.
Cover by Max Ernst
Price $2.00

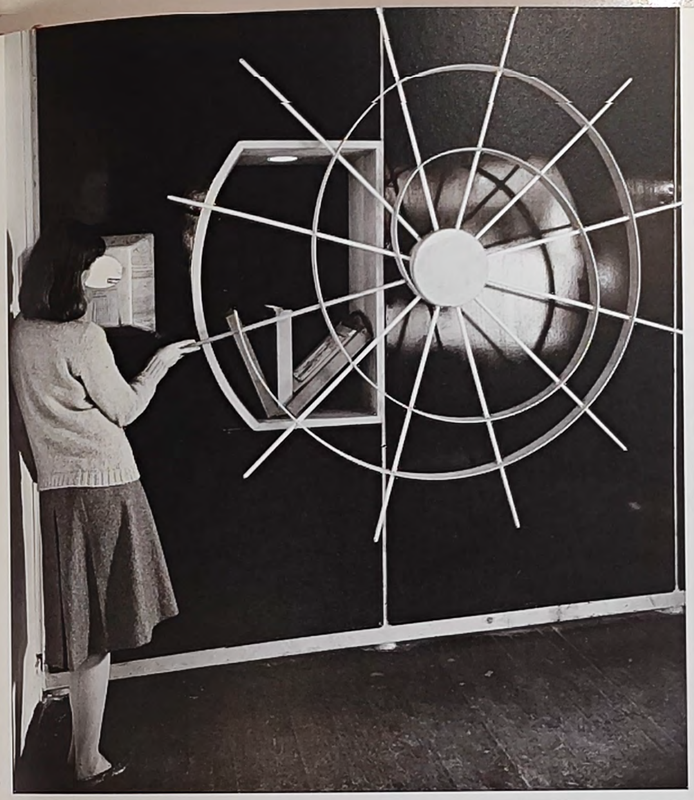
↑ Announcement card for the catalog, *Art of This Century*. The catalog was published several months prior to the October 1942 opening of Peggy Guggenheim's gallery.

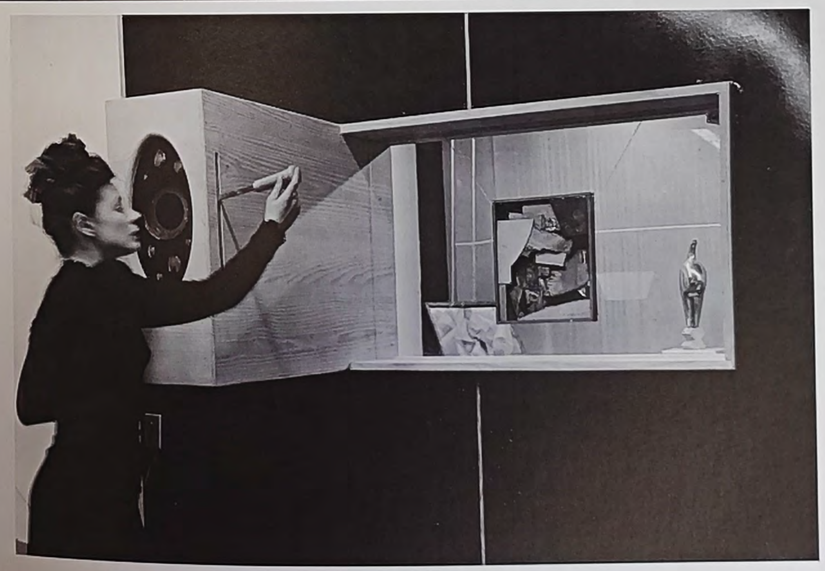
↓ and ↓↓ Two spreads from the catalog, designed by André Breton. The catalog contains artists' biographies, statements, and photographic portraits consisting only of the subjects' eyes.

↙ Cover of the catalog for Art of This Century, designed by Max Ernst, 1942. Published in an edition of 2,500, the catalog was promoted in a window display at Brentano's Bookstore on Fifth Avenue, alongside artworks from Peggy Guggenheim's collection.


Alexander Calder
MOBILE
Kinetic sculpture 1941
How can art be realized?
movement, directions, locked | spaces within the great spaces, the universe . . . some of these determine anything
every element visible to...etc., move, oscillate, enter and go in its relations to other elements of its existence
whether it be...not merely in "momentary" instant but by physical law of attraction between the stands of life
. . . abstractions which resemble nothing in life except their manner of inserting.
A. C.
Abstraction-création, 1937
96
97







Installation views, Kinetic Gallery.

← Frederick Kiesler's viewing mechanism for Marcel Duchamp's *Boîte-en-valise*. By rotating the spokes of the wheel, the viewer prompted a hidden, second wheel to turn, triggering reproductions of Duchamp's works to appear behind the peephole. Part of *Boîte-en-valise* was also presented in the wooden vitrine located behind the wheel.

↓ This shadow box, also designed by Kiesler, was considered part of the Kinetic Gallery, although it was located on the north wall of the Abstract Gallery. By moving a side lever, the viewer (here, artist Buffie Johnson) activated an internal light that illuminated a solitary artwork. Works in this installation included (left to right) Gino Severini's *Sea=Dancer*, Kurt Schwitters's *Relief* (suspended), and Constantin Brancusi's *Maiastra*.

Short Dresses ... Long Season

↑↑ "Short Dresses ... Long Season," *Vogue*, 1 January 1943. Art of This Century often served as the location of photography shoots for fashion magazines and other illustrated publications.

Art of This Century [collection cat.]
Epigraph
MULTIPLE AUTHORS
New York, 1942

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Art is in transition: that is one certain fact. And it is one more reason why it would be vain to attempt anything in the nature of pontifical judgment on its immediate manifestations. We should be content with the fact that art is alive—more vital and experimental than at any time since the Renaissance.

Herbert Read
Art Now, 1936

How deeply this corruption of taste had eaten into the German mind was shown in the material submitted for hanging by artists in the *House of German Art*. There were pictures with green skies and purple seas. There were paintings which could be explained only by abnormal eyesight or willful fraud on the part of the painter.

If they really paint in this manner because they see things this way, then these unhappy persons should be dealt with in the Department of the ministry of the Interior where sterilization of the insane is dealt with, to prevent them from passing on their unfortunate inheritance. If they really do not see things like that and still persist in painting in this manner, then these artists should be dealt with by the criminal courts.

I was always determined if fate ever gave us power not to discuss these matters, but to make decisions. Understanding of such great affairs is not given to every one.

Adolf Hitler
Munich, July 18th, 1937

There is only one explanation of this failure of the Fascist and Nazi Revolutions to inspire a great art and I cannot describe it better than in the words of Giovanni Gentile, a liberal philosopher who sold himself to the Fascist régime. Speaking to an audience of teachers in Trieste shortly after that city had fallen into Italian hands at the end of the last war, he declared: "spiritual activity works only in the plentitude of freedom."

Herbert Read, 1941

Foreword
PEGGY GUGGENHEIM

–

The purpose of this book is to serve as a catalogue to the permanent collection exhibited at *Art of This Century*. As most things change unexpectedly during the course of their development this catalogue has, to my great surprise, become an anthology of non-realistic art covering the period of 1910–1942. Its limitations are due to the fact that it only contains reproductions of paintings and sculpture owned by me. I do hope that the next edition will be more complete and that I shall be able to acquire several other important works that represent phases of the evolution of this art.

I wish to thank my friends, who have helped me assemble the material used in this catalogue, as well as in the collection itself, namely Petro van Doesburg, André Breton, Max Ernst, Marcel Duchamp, Herbert Read, Howard Putzel, and Jimmy Ernst. I also want to thank Lawrence Vail for translating most of the foreign manuscripts used herein, Maria Jolas and Andry Farcy, Director of the Museum of Grenoble, for harboring my collection during the German invasion and occupation of France, and René Lefebvre for rescuing it and sending it to America. I wish especially to acknowledge my indebtedness to Alfred H. Barr, Jr., whose work has been my great inspiration.

"Note on Designing the Gallery"
[public statement]
FREDERICK J. KIESLER
New York, October 1942

–

Primitive man knew no separate worlds of vision and of fact. He knew one world in which both were continually present within in the pattern of everyday experience. And when he carved and painted the walls of his cave or the side of a cliff, no frames or borders cut off his works of art from space or life—the same space, the same life that flowed around his animals, his demons and himself.

It is the principle of unity, primordial unity, the unity between man's creative consciousness and his daily environment which governs the presentation of paintings, sculptures, furnishings and enclosures in these four galleries. That such unity once existed we know. We know that it was destroyed. The world today offers terrible enough proof that it must exist again. The work of art must resume its generic function as an active, organic factor in human life. Man, seeing in a piece of sculpture or a painting on canvas the artist's projected vision, must recognize his act of seeing—of "receiving"—as a participation in the creative process no less essential and direct than the artist's own.

Today, the framed painting on the wall has become a decorative cipher without life and meaning, or else, to the more susceptible observer, an object of interest existing in a world distinct from his. Its frame is at once symbol and agent of an artificial duality of "vision" and "reality," or "image" and "environment," a plastic barrier across which man looks from the world he inhabits to the alien world in which the work of art has its being. That barrier must be dissolved: the frame, today reduced to an arbitrary rigidity, must regain its architectural, spatial significance. The two opposing worlds must be seen again as jointly indispensable forces in the same world. The ancient magic must be recreated whereby the God and the mask of the God, the deer and the image of the deer, existed with equal potency, with the same immediate reality in one living universe.

It is up to the architectural technician of today to invent, in terms of his techniques, a means whereby such unity can again be made possible. He can do this, not by debauching the honesty of any style preceding his own time, but simply by expressing through the methods of his profession his answers to the problems of life and of that aspect of life which is art. A method of spatial-exhibition which I had begun to develop as far back as 1924, in Vienna, seemed in the present case, the just solution. *)

Miss Guggenheim, director of the gallery, suggested too the elimination of the frame.

Renaissance man was the last even to glimpse—in the Dome of St. Peter's, the Altarpieces of churches—this revelation of the universe as one harmonious whole. He had long since reduced the fresco to the easel painting, the architectural segment to the frame, and the work of art to a symbol of private affluence and connoisseurship; all to meet the requirements of a changing society. During the centuries that followed, the breakdown of social unity was well under way. By the end of the nineteenth century it was complete. Individuals have tried to stem the onrush of disintegration. But no single effort has

been successful on the basic issue. Attempts have been made to eliminate the frame, to extend the painting over it, to mount it on a larger board, but, unless the whole environmental coordination changes, elimination of the frame remains absurd.

We, the inheritors of the chaos, must be the architects of a new unity. These galleries are a demonstration of a changing world, in which the artist's work stands forth as a vital entity in a spatial whole, and art stands forth as a vital link in the structure of a new myth.

*) Footnote:
Theater and Music Festival of the City of Vienna, 1924: this method aimed at a varied transparency of the whole room, called L and T units, used paintings without frames, sculpture on cantilever.
World's Fair, Girand Palais, Paris, 1925: co-ordinated suspension technique of display; later widely adopted in Europe especially for the display of photographs and photo-murals.
Exhibition "New Theater Technique", New York, 1926: L and T method also used. Prize winning competition plans for Woodstock Theater, New York, 1928; light weight suspension and cable-lacing used. Laboratory, School of Architecture, Columbia University, New York, 1936; continuous lacing from ceiling to floor at various depths off the walls used for exhibits.
The plans for the galleries of Art of this Century were completed in New York, April 1942.

Reference Material: Magazines: *De Stijl*, No 11/14, Paris 1925; Official Catalog Musiic and Theater Festival, Vienna 1924; *Architectural Forum*, December 1932; *Shelter-Magazine*, N.Y., May, 1934; *Theatre Arts Monthly* "The Universal", 1936, "Contemporary Art" by Kiesler, Brentano's, 1930; *Cubism and Abstract Art* by Alfred Barr, Jr, N.Y. 1936, etc.

"New Gallery Ideas: The Guggenheim Collection Shown in a Remarkable Manner"
HENRY MCBRIDE
New York Sun — 23 October 1942
–
If the Surrealist paintings in the Whitelaw Reid mansion, described last week, were curious entertainment, the newest collection, owned by Peggy Guggenheim and shown as the "Art of This Century" in the new gallery at 30 West 57th street, is curiouser still. Frankly, my eyes have never bulged further from their sockets than at this show.

For Frederick J. Kiesler, who has been called in by Miss Guggenheim to install these amazing pictures and carvings, has made such a startling job of it that these still questionable works of art, that have been disputed at every turn by conventional people, almost escape the question marks that are usually hurled at them, and seem to tie themselves naturally enough to the "age of demolition."

"We, the inheritors of chaos," says Mr. Kiesler, "must be the architects of a new unity," and the mere fact that the pictures escape criticism suggests that something of his goal has been achieved. He goes back to the earliest cave paintings and cliff carvings for justification of his procedures. He dispenses with picture frames and ignores the contention that picture galleries have walls. All the installation is mobile. Like Omar Khayam's tent it can be folded up and the owner may decamp across the desert at the first crack of an enemy gun. This certainly fits in with the headlines of the newspapers and with all of Mayor LaGuardia's recommendations.

Aesthetically I am embarrassed not by this idea but by the wealth of invention with which Mr. Kiesler carries it out. His circus has more than three rings. It has so many that it is difficult to hitch them to a dominant theme. Yes, the gallery might just as well be a tent. I can accept that thought. Yes, the pictures, if they are any good at all, can do without frames (especially the abstract ones—I have long been of that opinion).

Yes, it is all right to cross an invisible electric current in a passage-way and thereby cause some pictures to loom into view that you might not otherwise have looked at. The Pennsylvania Railway Station employed this device, so why not a picture gallery? Yes, it is all right to turn a wheel and see through a peep-hole the entire life-work of Marcel Duchamp right before you. Yes, the racks for viewing prints and drawings are the cutest arrangements of the kind I have ever seen. Yes, the abstract pictures look their best in the barrel-shaped gallery which spot-lights some of the things and throws some of them into deep shade. But what of the intermittent lights?

This scheme is too much like the "ordered society" of the Japanese. It compels you to the correct thought at the correct time. It is not my idea of aesthetic liberty. Like Emerson, I prefer to give my whims full play. At the moment I come up with a picture and begin to respond to it, I hate to have the lights shut off and be compelled to consider something different. It's too harsh a system of picture-viewing. It might be all right if you timed your entrance and went around like a puppet. But who wants to be a puppet?

So it goes all along the line. Miró, Picasso, Calder, Arp, Brancusi, Chirico, Salvador Dalí, Breton, Léger, Juan Gris, Paul Klee, Lipschitz, Masson, Matta, Ozenfant, Picabia, Braque, Yves Tanguy, and Kurt Seligmann, "unite," as Mr. Kiesler puts it, very easily with the times we live in.

"Surrealist Paintings Hung Surrealistically: One of Two New Exhibitions Makes Gallery Visit Delightful" [excerpt]
EMILY GENAUER
New York World-Telegram — 24 October 1942
–
There may be some profound reason why Surrealism should suddenly figure so prominently in the local art scene. It may be that the war is impelling artists to find some release from an almost intolerable reality, that in Surrealism they are achieving a kind of self-hypnosis. On the other hand, the sudden wave of Surrealist activity may have the simplest sort of explanation. Since the outbreak of the war a lot of Surrealist artists have arrived in this country, and it is altogether natural for them to carry on as they always have.

And I don't mean "carry on" to be a double entendre. However mad the two big new Surrealist exhibitions may seem, one of them at Peggy Guggenheim's new gallery, called Art of This Century, and the other at the old Whitelaw Reid mansion, under the auspices of the Co-ordinating Council of French Relief Societies, I don't use the phrase to suggest that the artists are clowning, but, rather, that they are continuing to work as they always have. There can be no doubt that both exhibitions are the product of serious, energetic, and almost pious activity. If the results appear impious in the extreme—that is something else again.

And it is something there would seem to be no need to go into again at this point. Surrealism pro and con, its validity, honesty and importance have been discussed ad infinitum. And will continue to be as long as André Breton's bushy hair waves, sex is fashionable and people dream dreams because—how does the line go?—in dreams you meet a better class of people.

COMMENT ON THE INSTALLATIONS

It remains, then, to discuss the shows themselves, the pictures they contain and their installation. And it's the installation in both cases which is the big news. Because the pictures are practically all either very familiar or very typical.

Frederick J. Kiesler, distinguished modern architect and designer, who is also director of the laboratory of Columbia University's School of Architecture, did the job on Art of This Century, and it is a job to make exhibition history. There are four separate divisions to the gallery—one devoted to abstract art, with paintings fastened from triangular suspension columns whose number can be easily increased or their location changed, and with one wall a long undulating surface of marine blue canvas; a second given to Surrealist pictures, and utilizing convex wood walls from which protrude special arms (sawed-off baseball bats) which can be adjusted so visitors may examine pictures from all angles; a third, in which pictures are shown automatically, with a paternoster for Klee's pictures providing for automatic release of them, and an invisible light beam controlling the rotation of his works, and, finally, a fourth room, which is really a painting library, with special mobile stands and bins arranged so the visitor may devise a little exhibition all for himself.

Going through the rooms is a mystifying and delightful experience. You feel like a child with a new toy that does all sorts of unpredictable things. The purpose of all this, obviously, is to make picture-seeing simpler, or, as Mr. Kiesler himself by no means simply puts it, to enable the "artist's work to stand forth as a vital entity in a spatial world and art stand forth as a vital link in the structure of a new myth."

In the room given to abstract paintings . . . I cannot help but feel, confusing. The triangular suspension columns keep getting in the way. The framework of the installation keeps intruding on one's consciousness.

In the Surrealist gallery, where you'll find pictures by Max Ernst, Dalí, Carrington, . . . and the rest, the effect of the curved unfinished wood-en walls is almost serene, conducive to easy, pleasant, stimulating examination of the works shown.

The library is a wonderful idea. Maybe the section given to automatic display is, too. For instance, the machine which rotates the pictures by Klee allows you 10 seconds in which to study each one. For most Klees that's just about right, too. . . .

"Our Hemisphere Posters" [excerpt]
EDWARD ALDEN JEWELL
New York Times, 25 October 1942
–
"ART OF THIS CENTURY"

. . . In other respects the week jogged along, not adding conspicuously to the season's momentum, for there weren't many openings, but furnishing a few events of more than routine interest. Among these surely the most piquant was the advent of Peggy Guggenheim's museum, established at 30 West Fifty-seventh Street.

She does not call it a museum. She calls it Art of This Century. But the adventure serves to place before the public, on a permanent basis, her entire collection, installed with such complex economy that room remains in which, as the program develops, changing exhibitions may be held—these to include "a yearly salon of young artists creating in America and elsewhere." Miss Guggenheim hopes that Art of This Century "will become a center where artists will be welcome and where they can feel that they are cooperating in establishing a research laboratory for new ideas." If all this doesn't add up to a museum, then I think the term requires overhauling.

True, Miss Guggenheim's museum dedicates itself to one particular phase of art alone, concerned as it is with the achievement of "modernists." But although the period thus recorded, so far as the permanent collection goes, spans only about three decades, the current panorama is taken also into account. And Miss Guggenheim remarks that "this undertaking will serve its purpose only if it succeeds in serving the future instead of recording the past"—one may feel that "*while* recording the past" would have polished off the dedication a little more accurately.

Much of the art Miss Guggenheim has assembled is familiar to us, or, when not concretely so, exemplifies talents such as go to compose the warp and woof of the many-faceted modern movement, from cubism to the present time. It should be specified, however, that Miss Guggenheim has not confined her connoisseurship to the work, alone, of recognized leaders in the field. Of course the roster embraces names such as Picasso, Braque, Chirico, Chagall, Brancusi, Ernst, Duchamp, Kandinsky, Léger, Klee, Miró, Picabia and Mondrian. But it also plays host to perhaps a score of artists of whom I, for one, seem never before to have heard. This fact gives breadth to the enterprise and enlarges our empire of research.

AMAZING INSTALLATION

Concerning the art thus made available I cannot speak more specifically at this time. Anyhow, the need for analysis may be deemed less pressing just now than the task of familiarizing ourselves with the lavish dramatization of Frederick J. Kiesler's "spatial architecture" ideas. Evidently Mr. Kiesler has been given carte blanche. He has built the museum in a truly miraculous way and with such inventive thoroughness that if anything has been overlooked it won't be missed, by the general public at least, for a long while.

Taking the frames off the pictures, Mr. Kiesler has framed the exhibition instead. Walls have ceased to be functional ("nous avons changé tout çela!") for in this rebel arrangement art moves out into the open. Sometimes, thus liberated, it looks faintly menacing—as if in the end it might prove that the spectator would be fixed to the wall and the art would stroll around making comments, sweet or sour as the case might be.

Perhaps my alarm is somewhat exaggerated. As a matter of fact, when I went to the press view I was less alarmed than bewildered and less bewildered than filled with a sense of wonders never ceasing. I half diffidently wanted to try the new museum rocking-chairs, but wasn't sure, in the midst of all these strange and wonderful gadgets, what might happen. The rocking-chairs may, indeed, be as comfortable as an old pair of bedroom slippers. That remains to be seen.

In fact I have a feeling that the whole experience provided by Miss Guggenheim and Mr. Kiesler should remain to be seen, and that (as drama critics agree when they go to mystery plays) suspense should not be vitiated by giving away secrets. Just consider, please, that another "must" (an experimental "must," if you like) has been added to your gallery list. . . .

"The Art Galleries: Sixteen Miles of String" [excerpt]
ROBERT M. COATES
New Yorker — 31 October 1942

. . . Surrealism figures again, in about equal proportion with abstractions, in the new museum called Art of This Century, just opened at 30 West Fifty-seventh Street. This was designed primarily to house the Peggy Guggenheim collection of European moderns, a particularly rich one, and the collection, now shown here in its entirety, certainly deserves your study. On first visit, however, the spectator is most likely to be struck by the setting, which combines a few features seen hitherto only at the Modern Museum with some others that must stem directly from Coney Island. Pictures hang from the ceiling on ropes or jut out from the walls on invisible supports; frames are everywhere dispensed with, and in one of the galleries the lights flash on and off along the walls at prearranged intervals, like staggered traffic lights, to regulate your pace from one part of the exhibit to another. A good deal of this, I'm afraid, is a little gadgety, but there's a basic logic about the arrangement, too, and if a certain sense of clutter that now clings to it can be done away with, the whole installation should prove very effective.

As for the collection itself, the Surrealist section seemed to me the best integrated and most inclusive. There you'll find works by everyone of consequence, from the lovely, surpassingly suggestive *The Red Tower* of the young Chirico to the latest Massons and Ernsts. The abstract section, by contrast, is limited almost entirely to the early Cubists, and though this is a gap, and a serious one, in the scope of the museum, it has the advantage of bringing to attention again a number of old favorites that have been out of circulation for some time. I was especially interested to see such pieces as the Metzinger *The Cyclist*, the Juan Gris *The Bottle of Martinique Rum*, and the two Picabias, *Infant Carburetor* and *Très Rare Peinture sur Terre*—all of them, in their various ways, landmarks of the teens and twenties. . . .

"Isms Rampant: Peggy Guggenheim's Dream World Goes Abstract, Cubist, and Generally Non-Real" [excerpt]
ANONYMOUS
Newsweek — New York, 2 November 1942

"It's a dream world; it's unbelievable," said the art patroness Peggy Guggenheim* of the gallery-museum she opened last week on 57th Street in Manhattan. Called Art of This Century, it had the country's most complete collection of modernism's isms, much of it bought by Miss Guggenheim in Paris and smuggled out disguised as household goods after France fell. And it displayed them in a setting as fantastic as the art itself.

Altogether, Art of This Century covered four galleries. Least spectacular was the more or less conventional room that served as a catch-all for temporary exhibits. The others were something else again. The cubistic-abstract gallery itself looked like a large cubistic painting. It was all curves and angles. Frameless pictures, suspended by tape or string, seemed to float in the air against a backdrop of rolling blue canvas.

The Surrealistic gallery was narrow and low-ceilinged, with concave walls on which wooden brackets held the canvases—again frameless since Miss Guggenheim believes that frames are "always wrong" and "kill a picture." The concealed direct and indirect lighting shone first on one side of the room for two minutes and then, after a three and a half second interval, on the other. Why? Because, says Frederick J. Kiesler, Columbia University architect who designed the gallery, "it's dynamic, it pulsates like your blood. Ordinary museum lighting makes a painting dead."

A fourth gallery was sort of a penny arcade peep show—except that you don't need pennies. In one display, reproductions of fantasies by Paul Klee, attached to a roller, flashed into the spotlight one by one. Opposite this was a large wooden wheel, turned by hand, which allowed the spectator to see through a wooden aperture a succession of the cubistic works of Marcel Duchamp.

Sprinkled through all this were 175 paintings and sculpture—half Surrealism and half abstract and cubistic, not to mention such subdivisions as Futurism, Purnism, Concretism, . . . For though Miss Guggenheim is the wife of one Surrealist painter (Max Ernst) and the ex-wife of another (Lawrence Vail), she claims she is equally devoted to all types of "non-real" art. To symbolize her impartiality she wore, on opening night, one abstract earring (a miniature mobile by Alexander Calder made of metal and wire in constant motion), and one Surrealistic earring (a little painting of a pink desert by Ives Tanguy).

*Miss Guggenheim is the daughter of the late copper magnate Benjamin Guggenheim; and niece of Simon Guggenheim, who founded the Guggenheim art fellowships, and of Solomon Guggenheim, who established the Museum of Non-Objective Art in New York.

"Inheritors of Chaos" [excerpt]
ANONYMOUS
Time — New York, 2 November 1942

As art lovers emerged from dimmed-out Manhattan streets, they encountered a blinding white light. "That's day," said the patroness of Surrealism, Peggy Guggenheim, shielding her eyes from a mass of blue-white electric bulbs. "Isn't it awful?" "Day" illuminated a "painting library" (a large room enclosed in a sinuous tarpaulin), where art lovers were invited to sit on narrow, legless, armless rockers, and by turning unframed canvases hung from triangular columns, study exhibits from any angle they desired. . . .

Beyond the painting library, gallery-goers enter a kind of artistic Coney Island. Here are shadow boxes, peepholes, in one of which, by raising a handle, is revealed a brilliantly lighted canvas by Swiss Painter Paul Klee. Another peep show, manipulated by turning a huge ship's wheel, shows a rotating exhibit of reproductions of all the works, including a miniature toilet for MEN, by screwball Surrealist Marcel Duchamp.

Beyond these gadgets mankind swarms into what seems to be a decorated subway. There spectators gaze at large canvases by England's Leonora Carrington, Spain's Miró, Chile's Matta, all their works unframed, suspended in the air from wooden arms protruding from concave plywood walls. Every two minutes, while onlookers enjoy this spectacle a roar as of an approaching train is heard, lights go out on one side of the gallery, pop on at the other. . . .

21

Ninth Street Show

New York, 1951

LOCATION AND DATES
60 East 9th Street, New York, 21 May–10 June 1951

ORGANIZER
Members of The Club

ITINERARY
None

ARTISTS
Calvin Albert, Lewin Alcopley, René Bouché, Theodore Brenson, James Brooks, Fritz Bultman, Peter Busa, Nicolas Carone, Giorgio Cavallon, Joseph Cornell, Robert De Niro, Enrico Donati, Friedel Dzubas, Jimmy Ernst, Herbert Ferber, John Ferren, Perle Fine, Helen Frankenthaler, Michael Goldberg (Michael Stuart), Robert Goodnough, Clement Greenberg, Florence Grippe, Peter Grippe, Philip Guston, Grace Hartigan, Hans Hofmann, Harry Jackson, Kappell, Earl Kerkam, Franz Kline, Guiton Knoop, Elaine de Kooning, Willem de Kooning, Albert Kotin, Lee Krasner, Alfred Leslie, Richard Lippold, Seymour Lipton, Conrad Marca-Relli, Boris Margo, George McNeil, Joan Mitchell, Robert Motherwell, Costantino Nivola, Philip Pavia, Jackson Pollock, Fairfield Porter, Melville Price, Robert Rauschenberg, Ad Reinhardt, Milton Resnick, Robert Richenberg, James Rosati, Anne Ryan, Ludwig Sander, Joop Sanders, Louis Schanker, Day N. Schnabel, Sonia Sekula, Aaron Siskind, David Smith, Theodoros Stamos, Joe Stefanelli, John Stephan, Jean Steubing, Bradley Walker Tomlin, Jack Tworkov, Esteban Vicente

EXHIBITION CATALOG
None

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[excerpt]
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The New Yorker — 31 October 1942

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ANO…
Newsweek — New…

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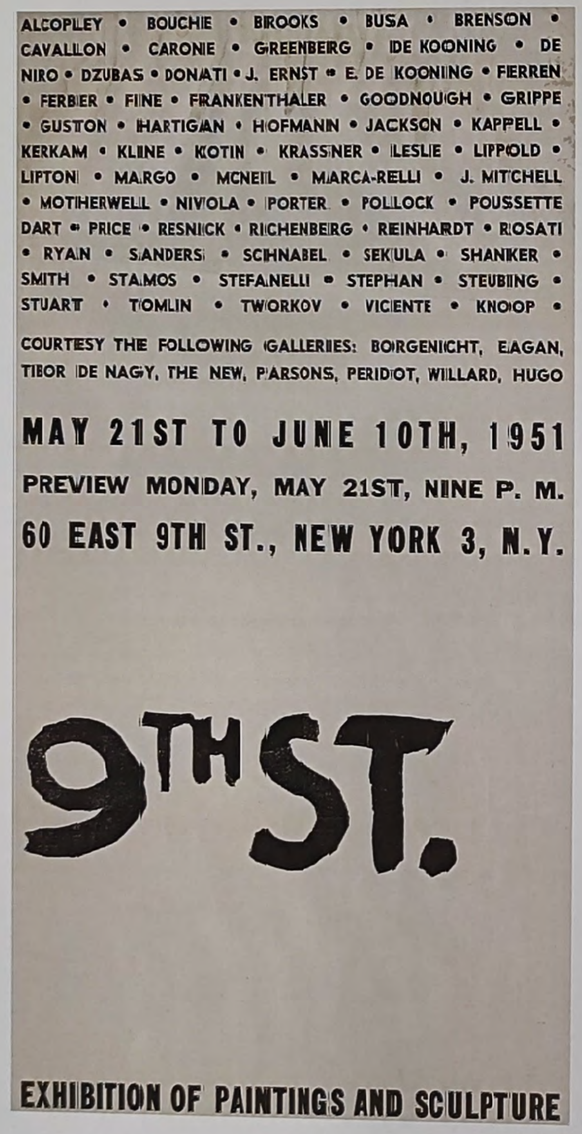
Sprinkled throug… and sculpture—half S… and cubistic, not to m… Futurism, Purism, C… Miss Guggenheim is … painter (Max Ernst) …

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
Number of artists: c. 68
Number of works: unknown
Total attendance: unknown

The "Ninth Street Show," assembled by members of The Club, an artists' organization central to the intellectual life of the New York School in the 1950s, sits on the cusp of generational change. From the work of Willem de Kooning and Jackson Pollock (whose *Number 1*, 1949, was hung vertically by mistake), to that of Joan Mitchell, who carried her painting across town with the help of future art dealer Leo Castelli, it spanned the first and second generations of Abstract Expressionists. But the exhibition was as much about a community as about a style or movement. Franz Kline's poster for the show featured the name of the street in the Greenwich Village neighborhood where most of the artists lived and worked.

Once the show was installed, in the first floor and basement of a building slated for demolition, even the participants were surprised to encounter such a coherent exhibition. This group of New Yorkers believed that they had created an art rivaling the School of Paris (in 1950 Castelli had organized a show with dealer Sidney Janis contrasting American and French painting, to the detriment of the latter), but they had never before seen a large number of their works in one place. And when Alfred H. Barr, Jr., founding director of the Museum of Modern Art, came to the opening, he was shocked to see how New York painting had developed since he had struggled to bring the first generation's work into the museum. Seeking further opportunities to summarize their efforts, a year and a half later the artists mounted the first of the Stable Annuals, a series of exhibitions held from 1953 to 1957. Anticipating the shifts in the market that would so change the New York art world in the late 1950s and '60s, they now found themselves uptown in the commercial Stable Gallery on West Fifty-eighth Street.


ALCOPLEY • BOUCHIE • BROOKS • BUSA • BRENSON •
CAVALLON • CARONE • GREENBERG • DE KOONING • DE
NIRO • DZUBAS • DONATI • J. ERNST • E. DE KOONING • FERREN
• FERBER • FINE • FRANKENTHALER • GOODNOUGH • GRIPPE
• GUSTON • HARTIGAN • HOFMANN • JACKSON • KAPPELL •
KERKAM • KLINE • KOTIN • KRASSNER • LESLIE • LIPPOLD •
LIPTON • MARGO • MCNEIL • MARCA-RELLI • J. MITCHELL
• MOTHERWELL • NIVOLA • PORTER • POLLOCK • POUSSETTE
DART • PRICE • RESNICK • RICHENBERG • REINHARDT • ROSATI
• RYAN • SANDERS • SCHNABEL • SEKULA • SHANKER •
SMITH • STAMOS • STEFANELLI • STEPHAN • STEUBING •
STUART • TOMLIN • TWORKOV • VICENTE • KNOOP •
COURTESY THE FOLLOWING GALLERIES: BORGENICHT, EAGAN,
TIBOR DE NAGY, THE NEW, PARSONS, PERIDOT, WILLARD, HUGO
MAY 21ST TO JUNE 10TH, 1951
PREVIEW MONDAY, MAY 21ST, NINE P. M.
60 EAST 9TH ST., NEW YORK 3, N.Y.
9TH ST.
EXHIBITION OF PAINTINGS AND SCULPTURE

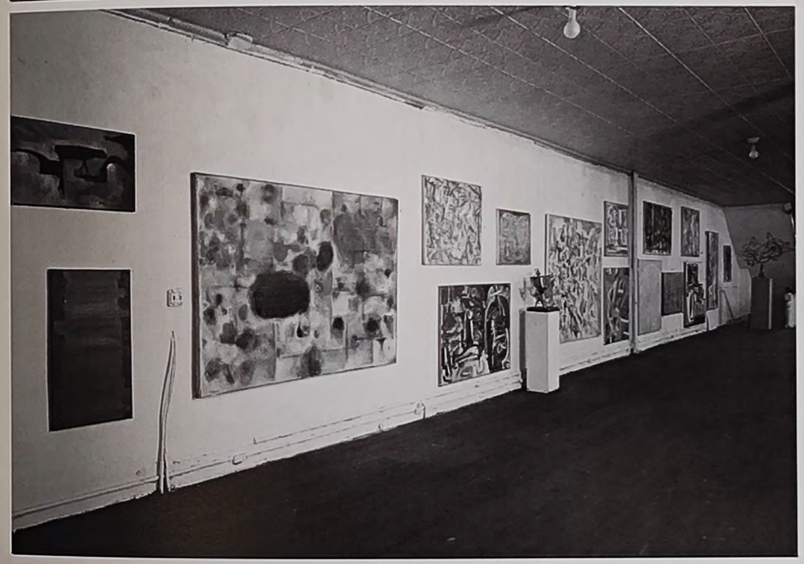
← Poster for the "Ninth Street Show," designed by Franz Kline. The poster was printed prior to the installation of the exhibition, and lists 61 artists, including Elaine and Willem de Kooning, Helen Frankenthaler, Philip Guston, Robert Motherwell, and Jackson Pollock. In the second row is the name of Clement Greenberg, the art critic who championed the Abstract Expressionist movement.

↗ Aaron Siskind, the only photographer included in the exhibition, documented the show in a series of photographs (pp. 331–33). Several members of The Club, such as Franz Kline, Conrad Marca-Relli, John Ferren, and Frederick Kiesler, prepared the space by painting the walls white, installing electricity, and erecting partitions for additional wall space. Kline exhibited a bold black-and-white canvas (far right), titled *Ninth Street* (1951).

→ The exhibition included sculptures by David Smith, Peter Grippe, James Rosati, and others, several of which can be seen at center and far right.

↘ Jackson Pollock's *Number 1* (center), a canvas intended to hang horizontally, was mistakenly installed vertically. To the left of Pollock's work is a box by Joseph Cornell, one of several artists whose name was omitted from the poster.

Pages 332–33
Willem de Kooning's *Woman* from 1949–50 (center, left) was included in the exhibition. The installation is often credited to Leo Castelli, one of the few non-artist members of The Club.



"20th Century Art in New Exhibition" [excerpt]

HOWARD DEVREE

New York Times — 23 May 1951

—

. . . An unusual exhibition has opened at 60 East Ninth Street. A group of enterprising artists has joined in transforming large, empty store quarters into galleries where work by fifty abstract painters may be seen until June 10. The New, Borgenicht, Eagan, Willard, Hugo, Peridot, Parsons and de Nagy Galleries have lent paintings by a number of their well-known artists, who have collaborated on the enterprise and whose work is interspersed in a highly democratic manner among that of newcomers to the exhibition field.

Among the more familiar names represented in painting and sculpture are Brooks, Cavallon, the de Koonings, Guston, Hoffmann, Lippold, Ernst, Ferber, Lipton, Margo, Fine, Motherwell, Pollock, Reinhardt, Stamos, Tomlin and Pousette-Dart.

Untitled review

THOMAS B. HESS

ARTnews — New York, June 1951

—

New York's Avant-Garde (Ninth Street to June 10) gathers spectacularly in a 90-foot former antique shop, newly whitewashed (by the exhibitors) for the occasion. An air of haphazard gaiety, confusion, punctuated by moments of achievement, reflects the organization of this mammoth show which, according to one of the organizers, "just grew." Some pictures were chosen by the artist himself; others picked by small delegations of colleagues. A few entries were accepted because "so-and-so" is "such a nice fellow"; a few because "such and such" was a "great help"; several for no conceivable reason whatsoever. Some out-of-town guests were invited; some in-town ones were simply forgotten; a number decided to make their absence conspicuously felt. But such hit-or-miss informality and enthusiasm has resulted in a fine and lively demonstration of modern abstract painting in and around New York—or, more properly, Greenwich Village. Authoritative statements come from de Kooning, Pollock, Franz Kline, Tworkov, Hoffmann, Kerkam, Vicente, Brooks, Motherwell, McNeil, Cavallon, Reinhardt, and sculptors David Smith and Peter Grippo. Among the lesser-known painters—whose extensive representation will make this exhibition doubly interesting to specialists—we especially noted Resnick, E. de Kooning, de Niro, Ferber, and Sanders. A number of the others seemed amateurishly avant-garde, attempting to pick up a technique which had been created to express complicated ideas and simply elaborate cleverly upon it. Their results are pretentious, huge, but nevertheless dainty and feminine, despite all the slappings and dashings. Still then canvases make pleasant wall-paper for the many powerful works presented in this lively manifestation of energy and accomplishment.

"Ninth Street Event"

BELLE KRASNE

Art Digest — New York, June 1951

—

An in-group of New York's most advanced artists, under the auspices of Leo Castelli, has rented a hall at 60 E. 9th St. for an exclusive spontaneous show of predominantly non-objective painting and sculpture. The event is one of the season's most stimulating—not because of its caliber, but because of the enthusiasm which went into its making. It runs to June 10.

A communal affair, the show represents 60-odd artists, ranging from the veteran Hans Hofmann to mentors Motherwell, Pollock, de Kooning and Tomlin, to such symbiotic disciples as Resnick, Jackson and Steubing. All contributed works of their own choosing.

Excitement runs high in this show. But, as no cross-section could demonstrate so effectively, it points up both the strength and weakness of today's self-styled School of New York. Strength includes vitality, conviction, freedom, and above all high per capita painting skill. But weaknesses are lack of concept, tendency to settle for mere decoration, inclination to confuse motor skill and therapeutic self-expression with meaningful art.

Though the focus is on painting, not sculpture, the sculptures—particularly those of Knoop, Smith, Ferber, Schmabel and Rosati—are among the best items on hand. All of which helps to confirm the suspicion that America's sculptors are making the big advances.

Interview with Ludwig Sander [excerpt]

PAUL CUMMINGS

4–12 February 1969

—

. . . PAUL CUMMINGS: You were in the famous "Ninth Street Show"?

—

LUDWIG SANDER: Yes.

—

PC: Who organized that?

—

LS: Leo Castelli. I'll tell you how it happened. Somebody said that there was this wonderful place on Ninth Street. A lot of people lived on Ninth Street then. One building had Conrad Marca-Relli, Franz Kline, and John Ferren. And Milton Resnick was across the way and he had that girlfriend who has since gone back to Cincinnati. And down the street from that Conrad had had another place in which he kept renting out rooms to different people. So there was a lot of activity on Ninth Street then. And somebody came and brought the idea around The Club that there was this wonderful big barn of an empty store. It was really a wholesaler's place. I know I'd been in there—had a job or something like that. But it had tremendous high ceilings and deep and open, and that we ought to have a show. And we had a meeting, a charter members' meeting. The Club, you know, had a policy against manifestoes, exhibitions, and so forth to see if we could get somebody else. And Leo volunteered to run it. And everybody was supposed to give him five bucks for expenses. We had to have electricity put in. And there was an announcement and so forth. I know I was one of the few who gave him five dollars.

—

PC: Well, that was a big show, wasn't it?

—

LS: Sure, it was.

—

PC: Lots of people in it.

—

LS: Some of them just came and hung their things on the wall. Some were asked.

—

PC: That was kind of the first manifestation.

—

LS: Well, I tell you, it got to be much more than we expected it to be.

—

PC: Yes.

—

LS: The crowd there the opening night! Really it was an exciting thing. Somebody got the idea, I think it was Freddy Kiesler who mentioned somebody—he wasn't in the show— . . . but when they had one of the Surreal shows, I think it was in Paris years ago, what they did was hang a bare 200-watt bulb out in front, just a bare bulb, that stark light. And the second floor had hardly any flooring in it, I don't know why, it must have been ripped up—and I went up with somebody else and there was a flagpole socket there. And we put a flagpole out and hung a 200-or 300-watt light from it. And that night the cars that arrived! The cabs that came! It was like, you know, the old newsreel pictures from a movie opening in Graumann's Chinese Theatre in Hollywood.

—

PC: Oh, yes.

—

LS: And all the stars. And you know the strong lights that they used in those days that blotted out everybody? Well, that's what it looked like. There was this stark light hanging out in front, this bug bulb. And the jam of taxis pulling up, you know, five or six at a time. People getting out in evening clothes. Whoever they were in those days. I didn't know too many. One thing I do remember. I was a little surprised that Leo Castelli didn't know Bertha Schaefer. I thought Leo knew everybody. And I remember that introduction. And then we took turns sitting there in the daytime and at night. And really it was amazing the number of people that came to that. It gave us some enthusiasm about ourselves I think. It did us more good in our own eyes than it did in any other way. I think there was only one thing sold. . . .

—

Transcript from the Oral History Program, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.

Interview with Leo Castelli [excerpt]

BARBARA ROSE

July 1969

—

. . . BARBARA ROSE: I know that you were involved in setting up the "Ninth Street Show" in 1951. Could you tell me something about that?

—

LEO CASTELLI: Well, by 1951—this Club had started in 1949 and had become a quite active affair. First of all we saw each other very often, at least once a week, and then—

—

BR: What were the issues?

—

LC: Well, I think that one important issue apart from the function of the painter and all the usual stuff that is discussed among painters was the position of the American painter versus the European painter. It was not specifically discussed but there was a clear feeling that American painting was becoming very important. And perhaps—it occurs to me now, I never thought about it in these terms, one role that I played was that I formed another kind of bridge between Europe and the American painters . . . the only European really who seems to have understood them, and not only understood them, but really they were my great enthusiasm. For me they were just the great thing happening. . . .

—

BR: Well, what was the conception of the American artist, of his role as opposed to that of the European artist? I mean you began saying that they felt differently about their social role, let's say, or their role versus the audience.

—

LC: I don't think that they had any particular notion about playing a social role. On the contrary they rather rejected society. They considered themselves as an isolated group, as a group that was functioning within its own territory and they really didn't care very much about what people thought about them. In that sense they were very different from the Europeans. They were involved with themselves, with the group. And they started becoming—perhaps I, Motherwell, and other people encouraged them—very proud of themselves, very sure of themselves. They felt that they were accomplishing something, that they were contributing something for the first time. . . .

—

BR: Could you tell me about why the "Ninth Street Show" was organized and how it came into being and what its consequences were? How you were involved?

—

LC: Well, it came into being as an outgrowth precisely of the things that you've been asking constantly about: of what kind of feelings the American painters had in connection with their position toward the European painters. It was sort of an outburst of pride in their own strength. And we considered this almost as the first Salon des Indépendants; this is what I called it as a matter of fact. I was very proud of that aspect of it. I thought that never before anything of the kind had occurred in America. We had about ninety painters in it and they were almost exclusively I would say, because there were a few exceptions, composed of artists who were involved with The Club. Not all of them members but at least people who gravitated around The Club and came often because also non-members were admitted there, of course. So the major figures there were de Kooning, who had taken an important hand in the development of The Club; actually he was much more active then in, say, group activities than he is now; he has become rather solitary, as you know. De Kooning was very important. Franz Kline was very important, Marca-Relli was a good organizer; he was involved in it.

—

BR: Was all the painting abstract?

—

LC: It was mostly I would say abstract, yes. Because people like Larry Rivers and Joan Mitchell, Grace Hartigan —Joan Mitchell stayed abstract—especially those two who later became figurative painters came right after that.

—

BR: Did the show make much of a splash? Was there much public reaction to it?

—

LC: Well, it was a great event. We had a stream right across the street. It was a very wonderful warm day. This was in an empty store—in a house that was up for demolition and we had paid, I think, $70 to have it for two months before it got demolished. All the painters had participated in refurbishing it, in painting this place that was almost abandoned. And it was very nice and neat. There are photographs to show you how it looked. And Franz had designed the announcement which

was just a sheet of paper. I think it cost $25. And it seemed a lot of money. I sort of footed most of the bill although I didn't have much money either. I think that I forked out as much as $200 and that seemed a tremendous amount of money for the rent, and for this catalogue that cost $25 Franz designed. We were all there for three days hanging and re-hanging the show. All kinds of painters who were dissatisfied with the way they hung, I remember. Rauschenberg was included in it; Reinhardt was included in it. David Smith, poor man, had a beautiful sculpture right in the window. Pollock was included although he did not participate too much in Club activities. But he was painting.

–

BR: The sense of community which obviously existed at this point—

–

LC: Oh, yes, enormously. . . .

–

Transcript from the Oral History Program, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.

Interview with Esteban Vicente: [excerpt]
PHYLLIS TUCHMAN
6 April 1982

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. . . PHYLLIS TUCHMAN: Were there any special shows that stand out in your mind or events at The Club?

–

ESTEBAN VICENTE: Well, there was a show that was done and it was a show that never has been written about. And it was a very important show in the city, and that was—you might have heard about it—the "Ninth Street Show."

–

PT: Yes, I heard about that.

–

EV: You know how it was made?

–

PT: Can you tell me?

–

EV: Yes. There was a building on 9th Street and it was empty. It was going to be torn down. And in that building was a big space that had been a business, some kind of business, and it was empty. So then the idea was to rent a place for a month, and then the artists themselves got together, I mean a group of people would get together in Ferren's studio.

–

PT: John Ferren.

–

EV: John Ferren. It was there in the same block next to that building that was going to be torn down. And we had a meeting there and it was de Kooning, Kline, Marca-Relli, and I think maybe also Milton Resnick, and myself. And then we made a committee. The committee, the purpose of the committee was to invite the other artists, and nobody else was involved, only artists. The show was run by the artists, nobody else. So we invited everybody, and the show was very important. Everybody was there including Clement Greenberg. We got a painting of his. Yes, so that was the show. Nobody else did anything about it. It was only artists. It was this committee, and then it was artists only, and we invited who we thought was important to be invited.

From that moment on and later (it lasted one month) it was very well attended. And then after that the Stable Gallery took over and this show became an annual. After twice or three times, it disappeared also. And that is the show that I remember always because it was very significant and important.

–

PT: I've never understood. I know it was in a ground-level shop.

–

EV: Yes.

–

PT: Were the walls knocked down of the original store?

–

EV: No, no.

–

PT: Was the floor messy?

–

EV: No. We painted it.

–

PT: The artists painted it?

–

EV: Yes, and the walls. No, it was fine.

–

PT: And how did the younger artists, like I know Joan Mitchell was in that show and Helen Frankenthaler was. How was this younger generation . . . how did the older artists know the younger artists?

EV: That generation was not the younger generation. It was not. They hung around with us like everybody else. So I would not call them the younger generation.

–

PT: It was like the first time that they had shown.

–

EV: Yes, right. Because, you see, I don't think that these people are younger than Elaine de Kooning. I don't believe it. I mean Joan Mitchell I don't think is or Frankenthaler either. So they were part of things.

–

PT: How has Leo Castelli's name gotten associated with this show?

–

EV: Because he wanted to be there but he was not allowed, that's all.

–

PT: Okay, but I just wondered if this was the same show.

–

EV: He wanted to intervene. And probably the most he did—I'm not sure now but I think so—is that nobody had the money to pay the rent. It was $40 only. And I think he paid it or something, but that's all. He wanted to intervene, certainly he wanted to. As a matter of fact, he got in an argument with me about it because I was a close friend of his. I told him all the artists feel the same way—nobody could intervene who was an outsider. He had nothing to do with the show. Anybody who says so is a liar, believe me. . . .

–

Transcript from Mark Rothko and His Times Oral History Project, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.

22

The First Gutai Art Exhibition

Tokyo, 1955

LOCATION AND DATE
Ohara Hall, 5-7-17 Minami Aoyama Minato-ku, Tokyo,
19–28 October 1955

ORGANIZER
Gutai Art Association

ITINERARY
None

ARTISTS
Akira Kanayama, Toshiko Kinoshita, Sadamasa Motonaga, Saburo Murakami, Itoko Ono, Shozo Shimamoto, Fujiko Shiraga, Kazuo Shiraga, Yasuo Sumi, Atsuko Tanaka, Chiyu Uemae, Yozo Ukita, Tsuruko Yamazaki, Toshio Yoshida, Jiro Yoshihara, Michio Yoshihara

EXHIBITION CATALOG
"A Guide to the Gutai Art Exhibition" by Sadamasa Motonaga

RELATED PUBLICATION
Gutai Magazine: Special Edition of the First Gutai Exhibition, no. 4. Essay by Jiro Yoshihara and statements by participating artists, 1 July 1956.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
Number of artists: 16
Number of works: 60–150
Total attendance: unknown

t Exhibition" was, in fact, the second groundbreaking
group of young artists brought together in 1954 by
Yoshihara. Three months before, in the pine forest of
d mounted their "Experimental Outdoor Modern Art
enge the Midsummer Burning Sun"—displaying, among
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n posts scarred with axes and penetrated with nails.
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York School "action painting"), complemented his work
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etched paper mounted on large frames, also done before
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in Osaka and Tokyo. Yoshihara also promoted his group
work caught the attention of artist Allan Kaprow, who
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utai artists as contributors to the version of Abstract
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PT: I've never under
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PT: And how did the
Joan Mitchell was
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generation . . . how di
younger artists?

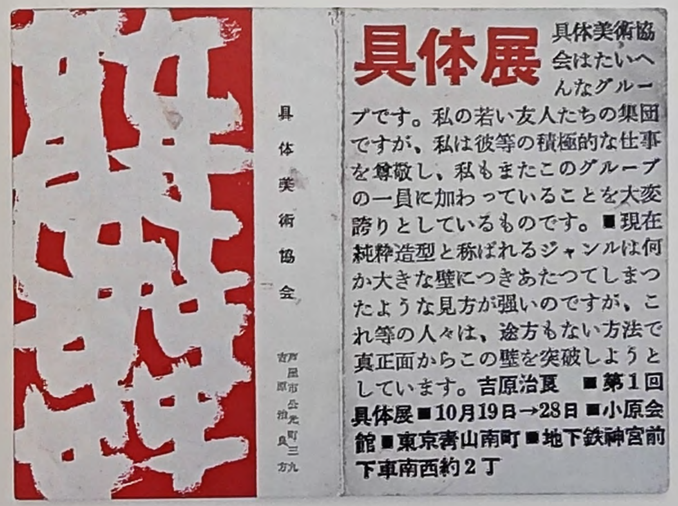
"The First Gutai Art Exhibition" was, in fact, the second groundbreaking show of works by a group of young artists brought together in 1954 by the older painter Jiro Yoshihara. Three months before, in the pine forest of Ashiya City, they had mounted their "Experimental Outdoor Modern Art Exhibition to Challenge the Midsummer Burning Sun"—displaying, among much else, a clear bag of red liquid and sharp sheets of metal hanging from the trees, and wooden posts scarred with axes and penetrated with nails. In the spirit of avant-gardism, Yoshihara exhorted his protégés to create what had never existed before, and the members of the Gutai group were among the most experimental artists working after World War II.

Inspired by Jackson Pollock, Yoshihara sought an art highlighting the impact of physical action on materials, an art that would go beyond tasteful abstract painting into nontraditional process and the performative. While the first outdoor exhibition displayed its radicalism most clearly in its siting, the first indoor exhibition more directly realized Yoshihara's aesthetic goals. Here Kazuo Shiraga's paintings, made with his feet while swinging from a rope (a riff on New York School "action painting"), complemented his work created during the press preview, *Challenging Mud*, for which he thrashed around in a large pile of wet clay. Equally dramatic was Saburo Murakami's *Making Six Holes in One Moment*, for which he smashed his upper body through layers of stretched paper mounted on large frames, also done before the press and then displayed in the first gallery. Such performances became a mark of Gutai activity, culminating in 1957 and 1958 with "Gutai Art on the Stage" events in Osaka and Tokyo. Yoshihara also promoted his group abroad, where their work caught the attention of artist Allan Kaprow, who saw them as prefiguring Happenings, and of French critic Michel Tapié, who embraced the Gutai artists as contributors to the version of Abstract Expressionism he called Art Informel.

← "The First Gutai Art Exhibition" took place in Ohara Hall, a school in Tokyo for avant-garde ikebana flower arranging directed by Houn Ohara. Sixteen artists participated in the exhibition, including (left to right) Saburo Murakami, Kazuo Shiraga, Akira Kanayama, Tsuruko Yamazaki, Yasuo Sumi, Jiro Yoshihara, Sadamasa Motonaga, Itoko Ono, and Toshio Yoshida.

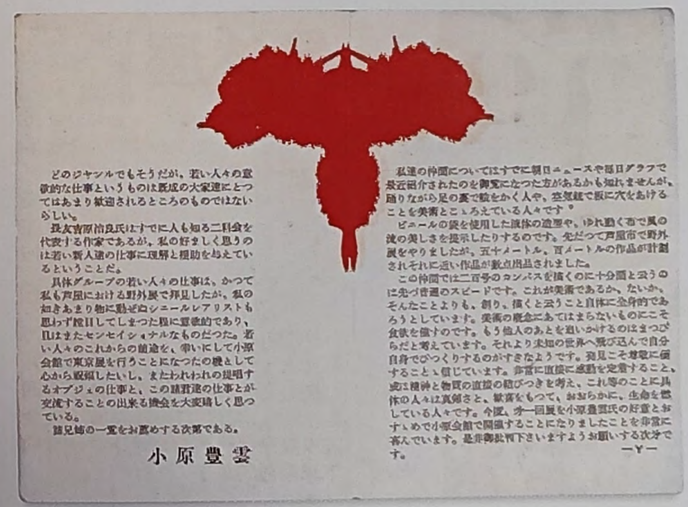
↓ Poster for "The First Gutai Art Exhibition," designed by Shozo Shimamoto. The design of the amber-colored poster includes a three-dimensional element—a square piece of white paper hinged to the center. The text below states the title, dates, and location of the exhibition.

↓ Exhibition announcement by Jiro Yoshihara, the leader of the Gutai Art Association. Describing the wide-ranging types of works created by Gutai artists, this announcement also emphasizes the group's interest in "direct emotion and direct connections between the spirit and the material. . . ." A similar version of this statement was printed on the invitation.

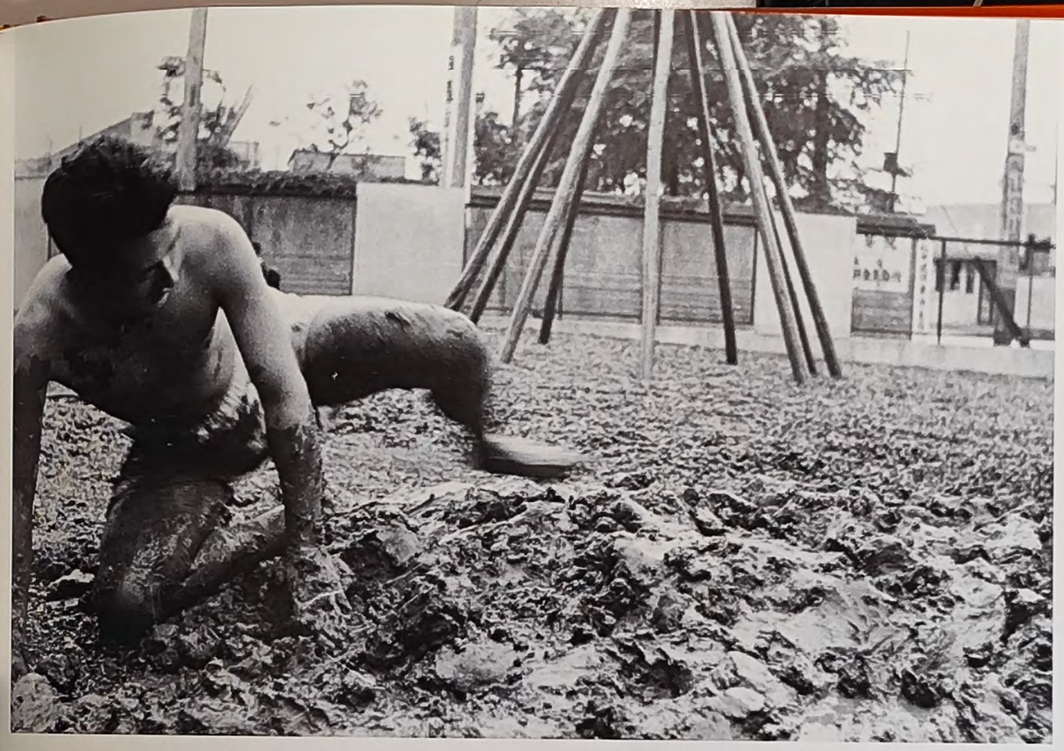


↑ Invitation to the opening, 19 October 1955. The front cover (left) states "The Gutai Art Association/Jiro Yoshihara and Co./39 Kimitsu-cho, Ashiya." On the back cover (right), Yoshihara articulates an important goal of the Gutai artists: "Today, the genre known as 'pure art' really seems to have come up against a huge wall. But with its outrageous methods and sincere approach, this new group of people is attempting to break right through that wall."

→ On the inside of the invitation, Houn Ohara welcomes the Gutai group to his exhibition hall and expresses his support for the movement (left). It also includes an extended version of Yoshihara's programmatic statement (right). (Translation, p. 346.)


どのジャンルでもそうだが、若い人々の意欲的な仕事というものは既成の大家連にとってはあまり敏感されるところのものではないらしい。
昨年吉原治良氏はすでに人も知る二科会を代表する作家であるが、私の好ましく思うのは若い新人達の仕事に理解と援助を与えているということだ。
具体グループの若い人々の仕事は、かつて私も芦屋における野外展で邦見したが、私の知きあまり他に類ぞロシュールレアリストも思わず脱帽してしまった程に意欲的であり、且はまたセンセイショナルなものだった。若い人々のこれからの前途を、乍にして小原会館で東京展を行うことになったの機として心から祝福したいし、またわれわれの提唱するオブジェの仕事と、この諸君達の仕事とが交流することの出来る機会を大変嬉しく思っている。
諸兄姉の一覧をお願めする次第である。
小原豊雲
私達の仲間についてはすでに朝日ニュースや毎日グラフで最近紹介されたのを御覧になった方があるかも知れませんが、踊りながら足の裏で数をかく人や、空気銃で板に穴をあけることを美術としている人々です。
ビニールの袋を使用した液体の造型や、ゆれ動く布で風の流の美しさを提示したりするのです。先だって芦屋市で野外展をやりましたが、五十メートル、百メートルの作品が計画されそれに近い作品が数点出品されました。
この仲間では二百号のカンバスを描くのに十分間と云うのに先づ普通のスピードです。これが美術であるか、ないか、そんなことよりも、創り、描くと云うこと自体に全身的でありとしています。美術の概念にあてはまらないものにこそ食欲を感すのです。もう他人のあとを追いかけるのはまっぴらだと考えています。それより未知の世界へ飛び込んで自分自身でつくりするのがすきなようです。我見こそ尊重に値すること信じています。非常に直接に感動を重要すること、更には精神と物質の直接の結びつきを考え、これ等のことに具体の人々は真剣さと、敏害をもって、おおらかに、生命を豊かにしている人々です。今回、第一回展を小原豊雲氏の好意とおすすめで小原会館で開催することになりましたことを非常に喜んでいます。是非御批評下さいますようお願いする次第です。
—Y—

← ↓ At the press preview on 19 October 1955, Kazuo Shiraga performed *Challenging Mud*, in which he flailed for twenty minutes in a heap of building clay in the courtyard of Ohara Hall. For the remainder of the exhibition, the mud remained on view, identified by a signpost bearing the title of the work.



↑ Adjacent to the pile of clay was a conical structure built of red-painted timber that Shiraga had used in another courtyard performance. The artist slashed the wood with an axe, creating aggressive scars on the posts.

→ In *Making Six Holes in One Moment*, Saburo Murakami stretched several layers of packing paper over two sets of wooden frames. He tore through the paper six times on the opening day, and the resulting work remained on view in the first room of the exhibition hall.

← Tsuruko Yamazaki posed in front of two of her works, both of which incorporated mirrors.

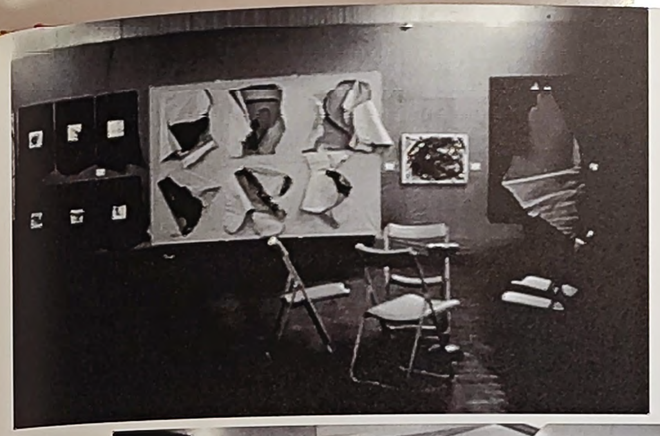
↗ In the first room of the exhibition, located on the ground floor of Ohara Hall, were six works by Yasuo Sumi (far left) and three works by Saburo Murakami (right), including both frames from the performance *Making Six Holes in One Moment*.

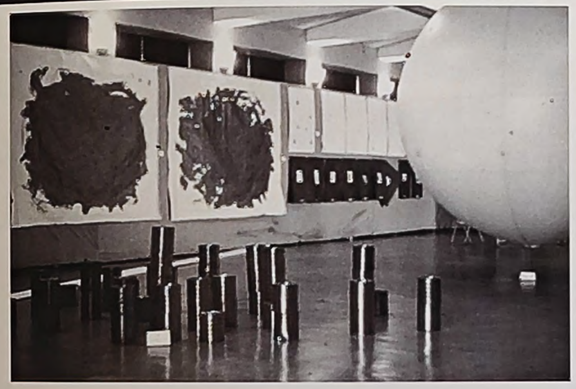
↗↗ Eight works by Toshio Yoshida were displayed in the first room (right). In addition, at least one of the twenty electric bells that formed Atsuko Tanaka's *Work (Bell)* was installed on the floor in this room (bottom right). Activated by flipping a switch, the bells rang in sequence throughout the rooms of the exhibition.

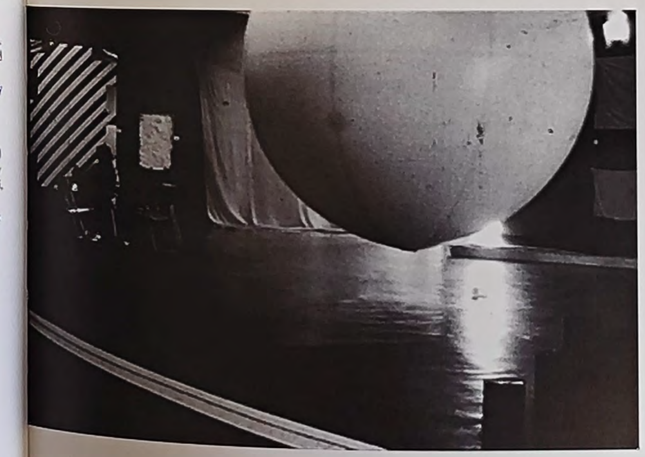
↗ Illuminated by red light, the second room, located on the first floor of the hall, included Tsuruko Yamazaki's 52 empty tin cans installed on the floor and Akira Kanayama's balloon hung from the ceiling. Kazuo Shiraga, suspended by rope, created two abstract paintings using his feet (far left). This room also included works by Murakami (far right, top row) and Shozo Shimamoto (far right, bottom row.)

→ Fujiko Shiraga's floor path (foreground) ran throughout the gallery. Also on display (from left) was a striped work by Yamazaki, a small painting by Jiro Yoshihara, and Tanaka's hanging piece of pink fluorescent silk entitled *Work (Pink Cloth)*.

→→ In the second room, a press crew filmed Sadamasa Motonaga viewing paintings by Jiro Yoshihara, one of which consisted of concrete, plaster, and dirt.







Invitation to "The First Gutai Exhibition"
HOUN OHARA AND JIRO YOSHIHARA
Tokyo, 1955
–

[Left side, Houn Ohara]
Regardless of the genre, the vigorous work of younger people doesn't generally receive a warm welcome from established masters in a given field.

My friend Jiro Yoshihara, familiar to many as the artist who heads the Nika-kai group, knows that I am fond of offering assistance and understanding to up-and-coming young artists.

I have already had the chance to see the work of the young artists in the Gutai group at an outdoor exhibition in Ashiya. In my humble opinion, their work was filled with an amazing amount of energy. Their work seemed unrelated to Surrealism, yet still highly sensational.

With such a bright future before them, it is an honor to have the opportunity to present the art of these young people in an exhibition at Tokyo's Ohara Hall. It is also a great joy to take part in a collaboration with the group, as our works will be displayed alongside those of the Gutai members.

We hope that you will take the time to view the exhibition.

[Right side, Jiro Yoshihara]
Many of you have perhaps already seen our friends in the recent articles in the *Asahi News* and *Mainichi Graph*, but just in case, these are people who consider art to be painting pictures with the bottom of their feet, while dancing and making holes in boards with air guns.

They also show us the beauty in liquids that are shaped by plastic bags and fabrics that sway in the breeze. Prior to this, they held an outdoor exhibition in Ashiya for which they had planned to create works that would grow to a length of 50 or 100 meters, and in the end, a few of the works did actually approach that size.

To these artists, painting a #200 canvas in ten minutes is considered normal speed. They are concerned more with putting all of themselves into the act of creating and painting than whether or not what they're doing is art. Things that don't fit into the category of art seem to be even more appealing to them, and they have absolutely no intention of following in anyone else's footsteps. More than anything, they take pleasure in leaping into unknown worlds and surprising themselves. And they believe that discovery itself merits respect. The Gutai artists are especially serious about experiencing direct emotions and making direct connections between spirit and material. They are joyously, freely burning with life.

It is a great pleasure to receive the kindness and support of Houn Ohara, and be given the opportunity to hold the First Gutai Exhibition at Ohara Hall. We look forward to your critical judgment of the work.

"A Guide to the Gutai Art Exhibition"
[exh. cat.]
SADAMASA MOTONAGA
Tokyo, 1955
–

Ohara Hall, Aoyama
October 19–28
The members of this group have set out to act in a straightforward manner, doing just as they like, and distancing themselves from the artistic concepts of the past. The first outgrowth of this intention is the exhibition poster. A white square of paper leaps out from an amber background. The poster might seem odd, but it captures the hearts of those with an interest in things that are fresh and unknown. An explanation of the exhibition is provided below, beginning with the first work.

First floor
Shozo Shimamoto's work is a print. At first sight, it might seem small and difficult to comprehend, but move closer and it seems quite intriguing. In the past, he has also shown the work with a magnifying glass. No one is really sure how he made the picture.

Toshiko Kinoshita: The complex colors and shapes are shockingly beautiful. They were applied to the paper with chemical agents. No paint was used. The creation of art is impossible to copy.

Itoko Ono: Roketsu dyeing [wax dyeing] was used to make this work, but the way it was done here differs widely from the original method.

Toshio Yoshida: The artist says that more than drawing, painting brings out an artist's unique qualities. There is a splendid display of paint in this work. Paint was shot at a plywood panel using an air gun. When the artist shot the gun, he stared fixedly at the target with a blank state of mind. Perhaps this work is also related to a concept of beauty that differs from the norm?

Saburo Murakami: Everyone remembers being scolded as a child for ripping a shoji [paper-paneled door] or tearing a fusuma [sliding door panels]. Destroying things is part of human nature. The feeling of instantly breaking through five or six sheets of framed paper is refreshing and the remnants are wonderfully vivid.

Yasuo Sumi: After dripping some enamel onto a sheet of paper and using a vibrator to create this unique painting, the pigment was sent flying in all directions.

Akira Kanayama: This work that is created through the extreme elimination of useless elements is neat and tidy, but also seems to be pushing the limits of the modern era. Nothing is expressed in the work, but in the end it is nothingness.

Atsuko Tanaka: Objects that resemble numbers have been written on a strange material. But are they really numbers? Along with this work is one that includes a series of bells. When a button enclosed in a box is pushed, the bells go off in order around the exhibition space. Hearing the sounds leaves a very unique impression on the viewer.

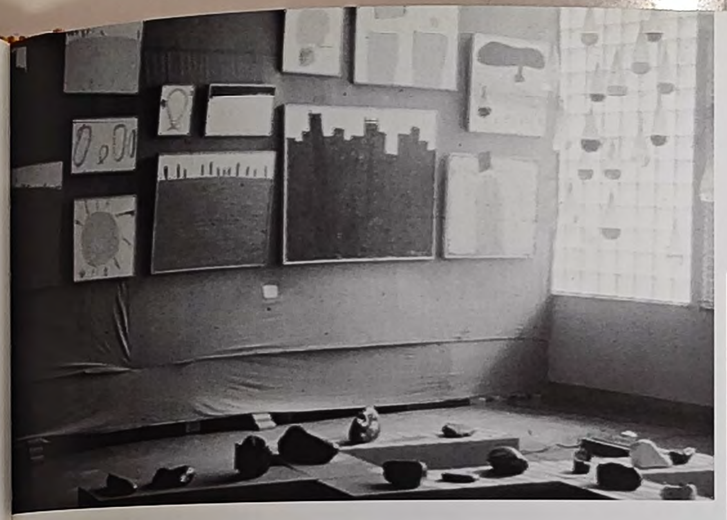
Michio Yoshihara: Using a spatula-like object, the artist spread primary colors of paint across three no. 150-sized pieces of plywood to convey a sense of unimpeded growth.

Chiyu Uemae: This work is enjoyable for its use of so many colors, but it also gives the viewer another kind of feeling.

Yozo Ukita: There is something very strange about this work, but what it is and whether the viewer will sense it is anybody's guess.

Second floor
Sadamasa Motonaga: The artist put colored water in plastic and polyethene bags and hung them up. The beauty of the light passing through the colored water could never have been realized in another way. The objects are simply left hanging with the light shining against them. With the artist's other works, in stone, the viewer is asked to fantasize about the material, left in its natural state. The straw planted in the stone gives the work a dream. Each of the materials, whether water, stone, or resin, is different, but together they create a single heartwarming pleasure.

Atsuko Tanaka: Many people will probably be puzzled when they see this work, which is only a piece of fabric with a few patterns on it. Those

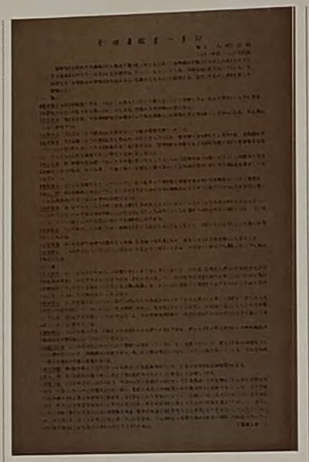


↑ Sadamasa Motonaga received an entire room for his works, which included several paintings, an installation of painted stones that the artist had gathered from a river in Tokyo, and *Work (Water)* displayed near the window.

↗ Motonaga inspecting his *Work (Water)*.

↓ To create *Work (Water)*, Motonaga filled clear plastic bags with colored water, which he hung at varying heights from the ceiling. The piece was installed near a window to achieve the full effect of sunlight passing through the transparent vessels.

→ Postcard reproduction of *Work (Water)*.



↑ "A Guide to the Gutai Art Exhibition," by Sadamasa Motonaga. (Translation, pp. 346–48.)

people are looking for technique in art. But art is not about technique. Most people are familiar with the beauty of a swaying cloth from their own home. The artist is presenting the same thing as a work of art. The action is what's important. The swaying of the pink cloth in the wind is a demonstration of deep beauty.

Shozo Shimamoto: This is another strange one. The viewer walks on top of a board that is hooked up to various devices. The artist hopes that when people walk on the work, they will enjoy the ups and downs as the bumps are conveyed through their body and they attempt to maintain their balance.

Tsuruko Yamazaki: A group of empty, round cans is simply scattered around the space. The colors are outrageous and fun. The mirror work consists of two parts, a square mirror and a round mirror, and naturally, the idea is to create reflections. The round mirror has a bluish color and an air of enchantment about it. In combination with the square one, the work leaves a strong impression.

Saburo Murakami: This avant-garde work was made by throwing a ball against a sheet of paper that was attached to the wall. There is a kind of cosmic mystery to the work.

Akira Kanayama: People can relax and enjoy watching the red photosphere as it burns like the sun, and the white balloon.

Kazuo Shiraga: This work was made with the artist's feet. Hanging on to a rope that was dangling from the ceiling, he tried to create some kinds of shapes by moving his feet around without looking down. The end result lacks any kind of structure. The viewer can deduct what sort of person the artist is from the traces that he has left. In addition to this work, the artist created the works outside the hall by stretching his body out in the mud and using all of his power to swing an axe and make cuts in the red logs. It is hoped that the viewer will use these traces to consider these unavoidable acts. It is human instinct to want to roll in the mud and damage a wooden pole. Have we not lost contact with a more honest way of living? There are things that we want to do and ways in which we want to do them. The artist hopes that the viewer will give some thought to contemporary society, which doesn't allow things like this to go on.

Fujiko Shiraga: There are organic lines that run through the center of both the artist's paintings. They seem to have no beginning or end. The artist hopes that the viewer will have a sense of the infinite. It is one of our ideals to continue burning with youthful passion for 100 or 1,000 years. We also want to savor the joys of life. It has nothing to do with age; a youthful life never ends no matter how old one becomes. Completing something quickly can also mean growing old quickly. The people we respect ruin themselves and create themselves again.

Jiro Yoshihara is one of these people. The viewer can sense his motivations from these six works; in particular, the one in which white plaster has been spread over a thin layer of concrete. With the dirt and plaster stuck together, the work has a large volume and undiminished power. The Gutai exhibition is full of unexpected things. The group creates art that has no relation to previous concepts. When something great is created, it cannot be contained within a concept. Our actions are worldwide and I am certain that they will have a deep impact on our lives. (Sadamasa Motonaga)

Organized by the Gutai Art Association

"Kansai Artists' Offensive"

MASANARI MURAI

Geijutsu Shincho — Tokyo, 1955

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The day after I received the artful invitation with gold edges, I headed out to the Gutai Exhibition at Ohara Hall in Aoyama. Fortunately, I had already heard about the event, so I had an idea of what to expect. First, to make this discussion a bit easier, let me offer a brief explanation of the exhibition.

In front of the hall, in a gravel-covered plaza, the first thing that caught my eye were several pieces of red-painted wood, arranged in a pyramidal shape resembling the frame of a tent, and hacked by an axe. Next to this was a work composed of kneaded dirt about the size of three tatami mats and a card with the artists' names on it. As I went into the hall, a large piece of ripped paper covered with gold leaf acted as the entrance. Once through this, I arrived in the first exhibition room.

Paintings were hung on each of the four walls, and in the center of the room, in a muddled state, stood a work that looked similar to a bridge under repair, and a box that was covered with a few pieces of ripped paper. The second room, on the second floor, held a collection of objects that were no less strange than those in the first room. One was a painted object with horns growing out of a rock, another was a collection of hanging plastic bags filled with colored water, and lastly, there was a call bell with electric wires running throughout the hall that rang over and over again. There was also a gigantic balloon that was too big to fit into the room but had been forced inside and partly flattened, a big pink-colored curtain of the sort that might be used in a magician's show, and as I recall, an assortment of avant-garde calligraphy. The exhibition had a kind of cheerful and interesting air about it, and when I visited, there happened to be a bunch of cameramen from the media running around with lights and electrical cords, which I thought at first was another work, but I turned out to be wrong.

As I took a deep interest in this quite peculiar exhibition, I was given the unenviable job of writing about it. But I don't intend to criticize the event. Nor will I attempt to assess whether it was good or bad, or comment on the principles on which it was based.

To return to the beginning, the wooden, pyramidal tent was a sculpture of cuts that an artist had created by swinging an axe inside of it. The next work, with the mud, offered traces of another artist, who had laid down naked on his stomach in a way that enabled him to twist around and squeeze the material with his hands. The focus of another work was on how one of the artists ripped some paper. The sound of the bell was a work that unfolded in real time and moved around at intervals through the space, and the curtain, painted fluorescent pink, was a planar work that moved like a wave undulating in the wind—or, in other words, a fabric mobile. One work that resembled a watercolor painting consisted of colored medicines poured across a sheet of paper as if the artist had conducted a science experiment.

"Gutai" is a collection of young Kansai artists, based primarily in Osaka. Although the works in the exhibition were quite bold, I felt as if the rest of the pieces were a bit forlorn. I thought that was one of the problems with the exhibition. I asked three or four young Tokyo artists how they felt about the show, and I'd like to tell you what they said. I thought I'd choose a few comments that I found interesting, such as this reply to my question about what kind of influence the event might have: "There aren't any visitors here, so it's not going to have any impact." Other comments included: "It's like the husk of a sensation or a collision with art, so there isn't any point in seriously considering the workmanship." "It has the form of a full body that expanded out of the automatic use of the head and the hands." "The female artists' works were much more intellectual than the mens'—the male works were purely physical." "From the viewpoint of the subconscious, the work is extremely simple." "There seemed to be an agreement between the devotional, new religious type of pressed flowers and the avant-garde, calligraphic, and showy aspects related to the original spirit of the creative impulse." Although one person said, "Sensation alone is meaningless," someone else said just the opposite, "This will probably be popular abroad." And while one viewer commented, "This is a new manifestation of Dada," another said, "Dada is meaningless in today's world," and still another said, "There's something capitalistic about it."

I listened to these various opinions with great interest. It seemed as if there was a tendency to link the exhibition with capitalism due to its scale and philosophy. There wasn't much said about a

FEATURES

By M/Sgt. L. G. Edmonds, USAF
Pacific Stars & Stripes Staff
Photos by Author

THERE MAY actually be a Gutai Art Group. There may be a Gutai Art Group. There has to be for the group is something that no writer could have dug out of his imagination.

Gutai means "embodiment." If you can figure out what that means, you are smarter than the members of the group who couldn't tell us.

The basic philosophy of the painters is that brush, palette and canvas are just plain obsolete. Modern art, evident, conventions . . . pure core, friend, right off the nub. The new IBM way to paint is to dig a hole in the ground. Or if you don't "dig" this, try dipping a ping-pong ball in ink and throwing it at a canvas. You get the control splatter effect, theoretically. If looks good even to our [illegible] — don't listen—say thing about art but I know what I like" type.]

BIG TEAR—Torn paper can be artistic, if the artist works as does the man at right.

FEEL OF ART—Walking across three up-ended boards is supposed to create an artistic feeling in feet.

ART IS A HOLE IN THE GROUND

Other odd effects seen in the 330 exhibit show at Tokyo's Ohara Kaikan included a painting made with the feet, a plain sheet of silk hung by the door so that the brown created artistic wrinkles in it, some large tin cans painted red and artistically arranged around the floor, and a board walk made of upraised canvas boards so that you twist and teeter across it. The theory is that this way you "feel" the art.

At the invitation of the artist, we tried it. We got a feeling all right. One of assisted insecurity.

Most art exhibits are solemn affairs. The artists look grave and dignified and the visitors groove and more dignified. But when one walks into a Gutai exhibition, everyone is smiling. There is animated conversation and delighted laughter. Everyone seems to be having a whale of a time, both spectators and artists.

THE GUTAI Art Group is a band of young artists from the Osaka area, headed by Jiro Yoshihara. Most are plain painters of what—often among this label, words—a consistent abstractions. But in their Gutai work they pull out all stops and allow free expression to their feelings. The idea of utilizing plastic, cans, cloths, plastic bags, concrete hole mixed in paints and lying down and wallowing in the mud (in one member does to create an artistic puddle) is just their way of trying to show that there is artistry and beauty in everything in the world.

A lot of their creations miss the mark wonderfully, but it is surprising how much of it is actually good. One mobile made by Saburo Murakami consists of plastic bags filled with colored liquids suspended by strings from the ceiling. It looks nice at first glance, but later when the sun strikes it, the bags turning to the brown flash lights that wasn't immediately changing color completely.

Another extremely effective job was done by candle drippings on canvas. There are pictures made by vibrator, plaster heaped on canvas, and holes torn in pieces of paper as a child sticks his fingers through the Japanese paper covered doors. Only artist Sadaso Motonaga is not content with fingers, he leaps right through. If you have the imagination to see art in torn paper—and it is possible for it to be—then you'll probably "like" it if you don't, then you may agree with the art critic of an English language newspaper who said the exhibit reminded the "typical literary man in an advanced mental institute."

WHAT are the Gutaians trying to prove? They say it is a search for beauty by pursuing all possible means. There is beauty, according to the Gutai theory, in every thing in the world. And this includes tin cans, paper boards, electric vibrators, piles of mud, splattered wood and—you've seen a hole in the ground!

THE HOLE STORY—Art can be a hole in the ground! Or so the Gutai Art Society claims. This artistic hole was made for group's outdoor exhibit held last summer in Kansai.

SHAKEY—Artist Yasuo Sumi used an electric vibrator to create textures—he says the best—pattern of paint on canvas.

REMBRANDT WRINKLES—The idea here is for the wind to create highly artistic wrinkles in the huge silk sheet. Since wind refused to cooperate, artist shakes the cloth to show effect.

16 Pacific Stars & Stripes FEATURES

↑ M/Sgt. L. G. Edmonds, "Art Is a Hole in the Ground," *Pacific Stars & Stripes* (Tokyo; the newspaper of the United States Armed Forces abroad), 9 November 1955.

→ Cover of *Gutai* no. 4 (Nishinomiya City, Japan), 1 July 1956. Created by members of Gutai, this periodical published an issue a year after the exhibition that includes an essay by Gutai leader Jiro Yoshihara (translation, p. 351), statements by participating artists, and installation photographs of the exhibition.

particular work being good on a certain situation existing. I have been told that Gutai's biggest success came this summer when the group held a show outdoors in a grove of pine trees in Ashiya. The Tokyo exhibition wasn't as large, so the result wasn't much more than a sampling.

In addition to the unique outdoor event, the group was also involved in the "Modern Art Fair," an extremely contemporary, comprehensive exhibition that included many types of paintings, sculptures, objects, pressed flowers, ceramics, calligraphy, and commercial art. The event was realized through the support of a capitalist sponsor. It was also the site of various business deals. In Kansai, it isn't at all unusual for a department store to allow a young artist to do whatever they please in the store's main show window.

There was a time when pure and simple art competed with painting according to the developments of an era, but these days, changes come about as a result of other conditions and elements. Art that takes a long time to create becomes quickly popularized and then begins to disappear. This unusual set of circumstances arose after the war, when in Kanto a remarkable unity occurred between the depiction of human figures and political resistance. The development was applauded and came to be known as "Social Realism." In recent years, there have also been solo exhibitions of Social Realism that dealt with a single theme or subject, and group shows that exhibited certain common tendencies. The images were often a kind of reportage. The exhibitions were characterized by their personal, subdued, and very small-scale displays. Common among artists in both Kanto and Kansai was youth and vigorous activity. Regardless of whether the art was originally representational or abstract, as the form gradually changed, the two grew similar. A strange tendency appeared in which artists creating a certain type of work simultaneously began to produce other types of art. In other words, they started to paint many types of pictures and didn't trouble themselves about painting. To satisfy the wishes of a patron, the artists were willing to study and execute a certain type of painting. In the process, they began to lose touch with the creative spirit.

In this context, one may feel very cynical about the impulsive type of creativity on display at the Gutai exhibition. In addition, as many others have noted lately, one also senses a high degree of commercialism in the exhibition. And yet, what's the harm in commercialism? Of course, all artists want to sell their pictures. Unfortunately, though, one senses that the standard of the art has suffered as a result.

Since I've started to veer off the topic a little, let me return once more to the subject at hand. An important difference between Kanto and Kansai artists is that the latter have confidence in their culture and maintain a strong intention to embark on a new type of art.

Another new group of Kyoto-based artists, who paint in the Japanese style and are collectively referred to as "Panreal," are also holding an exhibition in Tokyo. It's impossible to compare this exhibition to the Gutai show because Japanese-style painting still lags behind modern art. Individual developments in Japanese-style painting will probably always seem to be a step or two behind more modern forms. It would be interesting to see what would happen if the "Modern Art Fair" was held in Tokyo—that would also make these sorts of comparisons much easier. It is sometimes said that on an individual basis, dealing with Osaka people is quite easy and carefree, but when it comes to a group of people, the difference between the two regions is striking. I think this may well be the case. To put it in simple terms, the "Modern Art Fair" functions as an ordering or popularizing of new sensations, while "Gutai" represents the destruction of sensation and creative discovery. Either way, when it comes to making an effort to refresh sensations and move ahead, it is Kansai artists who lead the way.

Recently, it isn't only about the differences between Kanto and Kansai, but in another very interesting development, many regional artists from throughout the country have begun to show their work in Tokyo. Although many artists evacuated Tokyo and relocated to outlying areas during the war, they have now for the most part returned to the city. The influence that these people might have had on regional art is at this point very minimal. Even when there was such an influence, it probably developed into something entirely different. But this has nothing to do with the larger relationship between Kansai and Kanto. Both areas have had a strong influence on each other and this has played an important role in the development of new culture. The "Modern Art Fair" and "Gutai" are in all likelihood the latest examples.

(Member, Modern Art Association)

"Making Waves"

ANONYMOUS

Asahi Shimbun — Tokyo, 9 October 1955

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RIPPLES IN THE ART WORLD THIS FALL? AN EXCITING EXHIBITION IN TOKYO MASTER PAINTER YOSHIHARA'S "GUTAI" GROUP

Having attracted the interest of Houn Ohara, the head of the Ohara school of ikebana, works by twenty-five members of the "Gutai" group are set to be shown at Ohara Hall in Minami Aoyama, Tokyo, following a local exhibition in Mikage-cho, Higashi Nada-ku, Kobe. The group is led by the master painter Jiro Yoshihara (Nika-kai) of Kinmitsu-cho, Ashiya, a unique figure in the art world, and the upcoming event, the First Gutai Exhibition, is likely to be the subject of some controversy this fall.

The "Gutai" group consists primarily of avant-garde artists in their twenties. It was formed by people who had all visited Yoshihara to elicit his opinion of their work. Unlike artists of the past, this group is a collection of people with a strong motivation to discover unknown worlds. All of the artists have been honing their skills by showing works in a variety of events such as the Nika-kai, Jiyu Bijutsu, Shinsei Sakuha, and Kokuga-kai. This year the group also began to publish its own magazine, "Gutai," and the periodical has already received attention in several foreign countries.

This summer in a grove of pine trees in Ashiya, the group held the "Experimental Outdoor Modern Art Exhibition to Challenge the Midsummer Burning Sun." The climax of the event was truly unique and the unconventional works captured a great deal of attention. Ohara, a practitioner of avant-garde ikebana, spoke highly of the exhibition as being "extremely interesting," and plans for the Tokyo exhibition were made on the spot. Ohara himself has agreed to provide the hall and the equipment. The exhibition will consist of an indoor and an outdoor section.

Among the participating artists will be Kazuo Shiraga, of Amagasaki, who was recently introduced in the *Asahi News* for the pictures he paints with his feet. In Tokyo, this work will be shown along with one that Shiraga made by striking his body against a wall. Also on display will be Atsuko Tanaka's *Sound Structure*, a device that involves the repeated ringing of a bell, Akira Kanayama's *Fabric Trembling in the Wind*, a work that consists of an advertisement balloon floating indoors, and a piece by Shozo Shimamoto that makes use of the body's rhythms on slanted boards. Other artists will include Toshiko Kinoshita, Saburo Murakami, Yasuo Sumi, Tsuruko Yamazaki and Itoko Ono. This diverse line-up includes a kindergarten teacher, a factory hand, and an office worker. Each of the works is also a prime example of modern art, thoroughly destroying concepts of the past to the point where one is forced to ask, "This is a painting?"

A comment by Jiro Yoshihara: "The Tokyo art scene is severe. I hope that people will make an effort to understand the sincerity and energy my young friends are putting into their work. We are expecting about 70 percent of people who visit the show to criticize the exhibition. It was the same for Picasso at first. But if the remaining 30 percent voice their approval, the artists will gain enough confidence to continue showing their work."

"The Gutai Exhibition"

SHINICHI SEGI

Mizue — Tokyo, December 1955

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(October 24–28, Ohara Hall)

The Gutai Art Association is a group of young artists that has formed around artist Jiro Yoshihara in Osaka. They have staged a few exhibitions, independently published books of their work, and proven to be extremely energetic.

This exhibition was the first manifestation of Gutai in Tokyo, and it was also my first opportunity to come into contact with the group's work. The theme of the event revolved around "doing something completely unexpected . . . and creating art that is unrelated to concepts of the past."

In the exhibition space, there were plastic bags filled with colored liquid hanging from the ceiling, a bumpy object that looked like a drainboard, a large rubber ball, something that resembled a paper-covered screen that had been ripped, and a row of various-sized cans lined up on the floor. In their paintings, the artists use a variety of unusual materials, and attempt to create the effect of crashing directly into the canvas.

The methods—I'm not sure whether that's the correct word or not—used by these artists are based on a form of automatism, which they use to access the subconscious in search of new artistic expression. In doing so, the artists create work that could, theoretically, be created by anyone. The subconscious, however, is essentially a collective state and, therefore, the products that emerge from it often appear identical. At the same time, each creative act is unlikely to possess an equal degree of significance. Work that arises out of spontaneous acts breaks down fixed standards of beauty, but this alone cannot be equated with creativity. Of course, the artists might argue that they are well aware of this situation, but if so, why are the automatic and craftlike aspects of the work so immediately apparent? The Gutai group places a constant emphasis on the new, but I had the impression that the majority of the pieces in this exhibition were the result of technical experiments, and even when considered in aesthetic terms, many of them were imbued with the character of extremely old handicrafts.

"On the First Gutai Exhibition"

JIRO YOSHIHARA

Gutai, no. 4 — Nishinomiya City, Japan

1 July 1956

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We had no particularly sophisticated idea when deciding on the place for our first Gutai exhibition. The decision was rather the result of an accident.

The master of ikebana, Houn Ohara, who had seen our open-air exhibition in Ashiya (situated between Osaka and Kobe) last year, suggested to us to organize such an exhibition in the Ohara house in Tokyo. Consequently, we decided to do so.

The members of the Gutai group work together very harmonically, and they often organize mutual activities, but up to that point they had never had an exhibition of their own as a group. It was only in that sense that their own group exhibition in the Ohara house became also the first Gutai exhibition. We opened the exhibition in a relaxed mood and without any feeling of ceremony at all. Our actual discussion on this exhibition became almost a discussion on our forthcoming excursion to Tokyo. The special feature of it was the combined journey of all members of Gutai living in the Kansai area. One could almost compare it to a kindergarten excursion.

Several days before the opening of the exhibition Shiraga, Kanayama, Motonaga, Tanaka, Yamazaki, Sumi and Murakami left for Tokyo to start preparations. These preparations meant, for some of the artists, the production of new works in the place of the exhibition itself.

After his arrival in Tokyo Sadamasa Motonaga started out into the Okutama mountains with a rucksack on his back, to collect stones for his work, the colored stones. On his way he came under suspicion of smuggling foodstuffs, but he returned to Tokyo with almost 60 kg of stones.

Saburo Murakami immediately started by stretching thick packaging paper over both sides of a picture frame size no. 200, and one size no. 500, and covering the larger one with gold-colored varnish. He worked on this all night, without going to sleep. The big frame was to be set up in such a way that it blocked the entrance to the exhibition hall, and on the day of the opening was to be broken through by a person. The small frame was the preparation of a piece of art which was to be created by quickly piercing through the packaging paper.

Kazuo Shiraga persuaded a brick-layer to let him have approximately one ton of building clay for walls and piled it up in a heap at the entrance. He kneaded this heap of clay daily in order to give it the required hardness. He painted several timber posts red and set them up to form a scaffolding which looked almost like the legs of an octopus. The clay served to reach a certain result as shown in the photograph in this issue. The timber posts were to be cut with an axe later on. For this purpose he got himself a wonderful example of an axe which he polished every day.

One day before the opening of the exhibition I arrived in Tokyo. Many preparations were in their final state. The arriving works were set up on the ground floor and on the first floor of the Ohara building. What an out-of-this-world sight.

At the same time Shiraga and Murakami were about to finish their works. Many people from the press were there with their cameras, too.

When Shiraga, with his naked body, began to attack the clay as in a duel, it started raining quite hard. He and all the audience were completely soaked. But all were so excited that they did not even notice.

Several foreign reporters photographed Shiraga's face, smeared full of clay, and were

themselves lying on their stomachs at the end. Shiiraga's face remained happy and relaxed as though nothing strange had happened.

Murakami's work was completed by his breaking through the packing paper, which made a loud bang. The framework was covered with eight layers of thick packing paper stuck one on top of the other. He made six holes by stabbing through the paper at such speed that none of the cameramen got a picture. After he had stabbed the sixth hole, he suffered an attack of amnesia. Later he murmured, "Since then I have been reborn, I am a new person."

Kanjyama's balloon was borrowed, but still quite new. When the balloon was blown up, all those present clapped their hands. One half of the white balloon was beautifully lit in red by the light of a 2-kw bulb in a bell hung up above at an angle. The red electric light influenced the whole room. Yamazaki's work had round mirrors inserted into it. As each of these mirrors had a different angle, his [her] work flickered as it reflected this red light. My work was really yellow ochre but took on an indescribably red-brown shade in this light. I found this accidental result amusing. Yamazaki's stack of empty red tin cans turned a mysterious, deep color in the light and the path-like work by Fujiko Shiraga was now reminiscent of a path to the underworld. Fujiko Shiraga constructed the path by tearing a strip out of the middle of a piece of paper. She laid down a long wooden board and drew a line with a chisel from one end to the other.

Motonaga needed nearly an entire day to hang his vinyl bag up next to the window so that he was satisfied with the result. His work in blocks of stone stood on the ground on a base. His oil painting hung on the wall. He had a whole room for himself and looked satisfied. In the large room on the first floor there was a work by Shozo Shimamoto, which could be entitled "Work for trampling" or "Work for walking over." It was a work which was intended to be understood by the observer with his whole body with the help of his motorial nerves. I can well imagine his satisfied, grinning face every time an observer lost his balance because of an unexpected drop. I think that, as an agent between the person producing and the person feeling, his work of art will mark the beginning of an era. The picture painted by Shiraga with his feet hung in the center of a wall of the big room, opposite the large piece of scarcely treated cloth by Atsuko Tanaka. The work, which had generally been understood as a wild product without any consideration, hanging on this wall now had an aura of classical weight and of tranquility. Atsuko Tanaka claimed for herself a large wall, about 35 m long. She covered the larger part of it with simple rectangular strips side by side. Whilst the onlooker was confronted with this deep peacefulness, a pink strip of cloth fluttered in the wind outside at the window. A green strip of cloth had a piece of upholstery type of material of the same color sown [sewn] on its center.

At the entrance there was the large frame covered with gold-colored packing paper already mentioned by Murakami, which became a tunnel on the opening day. I was honored with the task of blasting a hole into the paper with my body. This may sound nice, but as a matter of fact I only played the role of a hammer for Murakami. But still, it was a unique experience. The moment I thrust myself through the paper, I heard a terrible bang in my ears, for the layers of paper were stretched tightly like the diaphragm of a large drum, and I felt as if I was in a completely different room. On the right-hand wall beside the entrance there were the eight works by Shizuko [Toshiko] Kinoshita which had been created by leaving chemicals to flow. I introduced this work in the last issue of this magazine. It radiates with the beauty of high skill. On the left of the entrance there was an object by Yozo Ukita, fresh and impudent like a sudden appearance; it fitted the place well. In the center of the room, as seen from the entrance, there was the work by Murakami already mentioned, with the six pierced holes. On the right of it the oil painting by Toshio Yoshida, and the work of colors by Itoko Ono, on the left of it the works by Sumi, Yoshihara and Uemae.

After all the works had been installed in their places we realized that, whilst all the paintings gave an impression of modesty, yet each work held its own and posed the spectator questions. For instance the painting by Toshio Yoshida with the applied oil paints, as natural as if it had just been pressed out of the tube. Of the three large paintings, size no. 120, by Michio Yoshihara, which he had quickly made in a train in one night, or the painting by Uemae with oil paints looking like threads of fabric. Nor should such works be overlooked as that by Itoko Ono with a strongly emphasized character of batik, or the work by Kazuo [Yasuo] Sumi with its mysterious lines created by a vibrator.

When we had nearly finished arranging the works we suddenly heard the shrill sounds of bells ringing through the hall.

This was the signal that the bell work by Atsuko Tanaka had finally been completed. All those present remained standing still, and their bodies became ears. The sound was jumping around on the two floors just like a living animal. It's late in the night.

We walked back and forth through the hall several times. All faces beamed with satisfaction. Everything possible had been done. We, the participants, showed each other our silent agreement that our views had been expressed there concretely.

Unfortunately, during the entire period of the exhibition, starting from the first day, with only very rare interruptions, it had been raining. Since the publicity for the exhibition had been only inadequate, and because the exhibition site was at a certain distance from the center of Tokyo, and therefore unfavorable, few visitors came in the first few days. However, there were a few passionately involved, sympathizing spectators.

Most of them were young people. Older colleagues of modern art also expressed their understanding. But sometimes we also met people with a harsh, hostile attitude. Those were people who could only understand Modern Art in a narrow, pre-existing concept. We, however, attach great importance to creativity and new discoveries. A few famous art critics realized that our exhibition had to be classified under quite a different category than the permanent and ubiquitous exhibitions of Modern Art. They valued highly the freshness which they felt in the entire exhibition area. But it was a pity we could not find any critic who would have had the courage to try to come to terms with the questions we had put, although with this exhibition we had offered the best opportunity for the most intensive discussions.

On the other hand we were able to hear sympathetic and understanding remarks, touching the central issue of our art, from young art students, or from visitors who, at first sight, had hardly anything to do with Modern Art. This seemed to us the most important result of the exhibition.

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From Barbara Bertozzi and Klaus Wolbert, Gutai: Japanese Avant-Garde, 1954–1965 *(Darmstadt, Germany: Mathildenhöhe Darmstadt, 1991), 410–14. Translation by Barbara Bertozzi and Klaus Wolbert.*

23

This Is Tomorrow

London, 1956

LOCATION AND DATES
Whitechapel Art Gallery, 80–82 Whitechapel High Street, London, 9 August–9 September 1956

CURATOR
Theo Crosby

ITINERARY
None

ARTISTS
Robert Adams, Lawrence Alloway, Peter Carter, J. D. H. Catleugh, Theo Crosby, John Ernest, Germano Facetti, Ernö Goldfinger, Richard Hamilton, Adrian Heath, Nigel Henderson, Anthony Hill, Geoffrey Holroyd, James Hull, Anthony Jackson, Sarah Jackson, Kenneth Martin, Mary Martin, Richard Matthews, John McHale, Frank Newby, Eduardo Paolozzi, Victor Pasmore, Helen Phillips, Michael Pine, Toni del Renzio, Emilio Scanavino, Alison Smithson, Peter Smithson, James Stirling, Leslie Thornton, William Turnbull, John Voelcker, John Weeks, Denis Williams, Colin St. John Wilson, Edward Wright

EXHIBITION CATALOG
This Is Tomorrow. Introductions by Lawrence Alloway, Reyner Banham, and David Lewis. London: Whitechapel Art Gallery, 1956.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
Number of artists: 37
Number of works: 12 projects
Total attendance: c. 19,000

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themselves lying on their stomachs at the end. Shiraga's face remained happy and relaxed as though nothing strange had happened.

Murakami's work was completed by his breaking through the packing paper, which made a loud bang. The framework was covered with eight layers of thick packing paper stuck one on top of the other. He made six holes by stabbing through the paper at such speed that none of the cameramen got a picture. After he had stabbed the sixth hole, he suffered an attack of amnesia. Later he murmured, "Since then I have been reborn, I am a new person."

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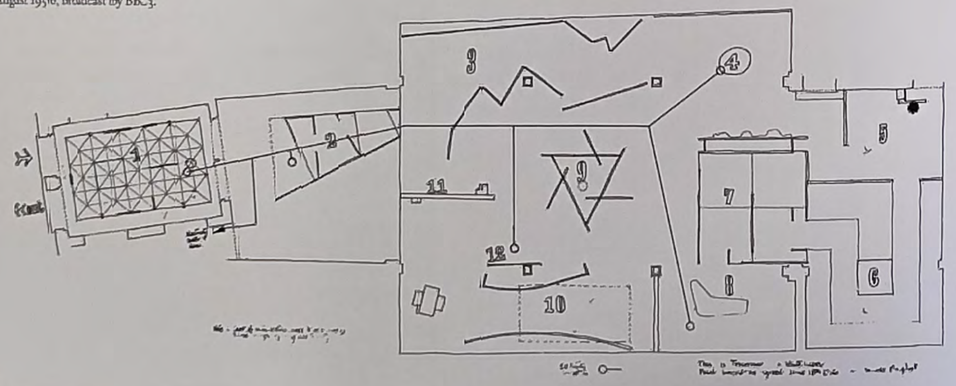
Featuring Robby the Robot from the 1956 science fiction film *Forbidden Planet*, "This Is Tomorrow" is remembered for its focus on the objects of popular culture. This reading of the exhibition was fostered by Lawrence Alloway, chief publicist for the show, who as an important critic in the 1960s and 1970s would identify the Independent Group of British artists and architects as a precursor to American Pop art. But "This Is Tomorrow"—like those who made up the loosely affiliated group—was not at all homogeneous in its interests or in its presentation strategies. The exhibition consisted of twelve different displays, each put together by a different team of three or four artists and architects. Some of them were associated with the pop culture concerns of the Independent Group, some were concerned wholly with the abstract Constructivism that was the other aesthetic strand of the artwork in the show, and some groups mixed the two.

The planning for the exhibition took almost two years, originating with a proposal for a show of abstract artists and designers at Royal Festival Hall. Ensuing discussion and argument among younger participants led to the multi-team approach and to a change of venue to the Whitechapel Art Gallery in London's East End. Each group produced a poster for the exhibition and contributed a section to the catalog. The richest variety was to be seen in the displays themselves. Group 2 juxtaposed a large photograph of a billowing-skirted Marilyn Monroe with the best-selling poster of Vincent van Gogh's *Sunflowers*, along with a squishy floor that dispersed strawberry-scented air freshener. Group 5 mixed contemporary Constructivist sculpture with recreations in plastic and wallboard of Kasimir Malevich's Suprematist paintings. Group 12 presented a proto-semiotic view of a discursive system of found images. While the content certainly departed from the pop imagery of legend, the variety of what was shown fit with the Independent Group's rejection of idealist aesthetics and with its penetrating interest in a diversity of cultural artifacts.

Automatic Opener

Robby the Robot, automation star of the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer film, "The Forbidden Planet," pauses for this "Gazette" picture before entering the Whitechapel Art Gallery to open the "This Is Tomorrow" exhibition.

↑ This photograph accompanied the front-page article "Robot Opens East End Art Show: Fun and Shocks in 'This Is Tomorrow,'" *Hackney Gazette* (London), 10 August 1956. Robby the Robot, star of the science fiction film *Forbidden Planet*, launched the exhibition. The widespread press coverage included a symposium on 17 August 1956, broadcast by BBC3.



↓ Floor plan, "This Is Tomorrow," Whitechapel Art Gallery. This drawing, by Colin St. John Wilson, a member of Group 10, indicates the location of each group's project.

→ Posters for "This Is Tomorrow." Each of the twelve groups of architects, painters, and sculptors created at least one limited-edition poster. From left: Group 1 poster designed by Theo Crosby, and two Group 2 posters designed by Richard Hamilton and John McHale. Richard Hamilton's iconic photocollage *Just What Is It That Makes Today's Homes So Different, So Appealing?* was made for one of the Group 2 posters (center).

↘ From left: two Group 3 posters designed by James Hull and J. D. H. Catleugh, Group 4 poster designed by Sarah Jackson, and Group 5 poster designed by John Ernest.

↘↘ From left: Group 6 poster designed by Nigel Henderson, Group 7 poster designed by Victor Pasmore, Group 8 poster designed by Richard Matthews, and Group 9 poster designed by Mary Martin.

↑↑ Group 1: Theo Crosby, Germano Facetti, William Turnbull, and Edward Wright. Upon entering the gallery, the viewer walked under a scaffold-like ceiling designed by Crosby and passed Turnbull's 5'-foot (1.5-meter)-high plaster sculpture, *Stargazer*. (Group 1 statement, p. 367.)

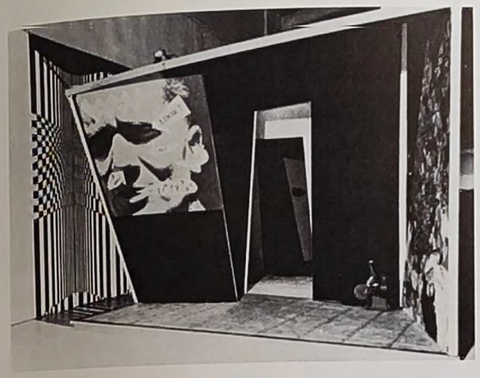
→ Group 2: Richard Hamilton, John McHale, and John Voelcker. McHale (on ladder, far left), Hamilton (on ladder, center), and others are seen here preparing their display. Although not an official member of Group 2, the artist Magda Cordell (on ladder, right) aided in the installation. (Group 2 statement, p. 367.)

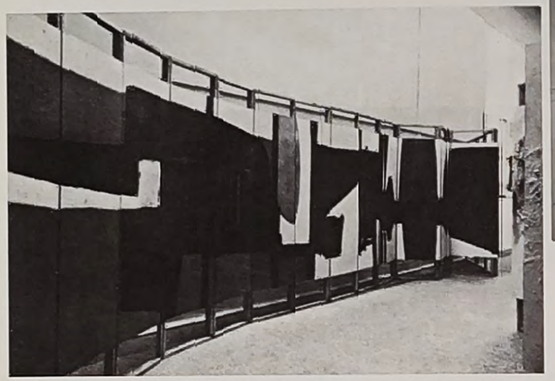
→ Group 2: The entrance to the installation included a magnified image of a human head, a prelude to the visitor's complete sensory experience. The press often compared this section to a carnival fun house.

→→ Group 2: Robby the Robot received a guided tour of the installation, which included a passageway lined with spinning optical illusions.

↘ Group 2: Also included in this section was a working jukebox, an oversize bottle of Guinness Extra Stout, a foam floor that released strawberry-scented air freshener, and a "CinemaScope" collage of popular film imagery.

↘↘ Group 2: The installation incorporated many images and objects from popular culture, including a 16-foot (4.9-meter)-high Robby the Robot, an image of Marilyn Monroe from the movie *The Seven-Year Itch*, and a poster of Vincent van Gogh's *Sunflowers*, the most widely sold reproduction at the National Gallery in London.





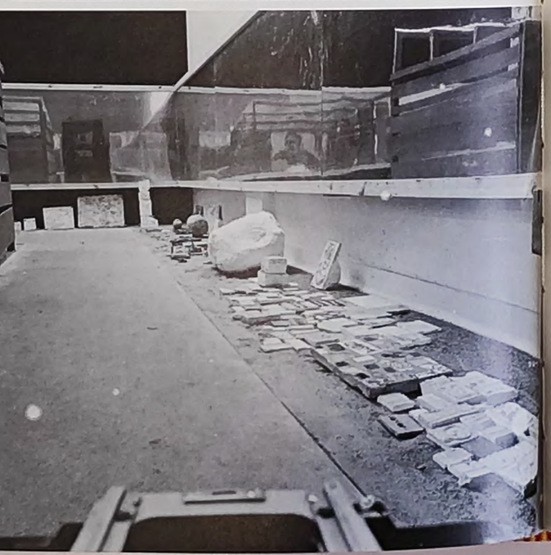
↑ Group 3: J. D. H. Catleugh, James Hull, and Leslie Thornton. This installation consisted of a painted, curved, and pierced mural attached to a series of folding screens.

↗ Group 3: The mural terminated in a three-part metal and plastic sculpture by Thornton.

↗↗ Group 4: Anthony Jackson, Sarah Jackson, and Emilio Scanavino created a clay wall sculpture accented in red light.

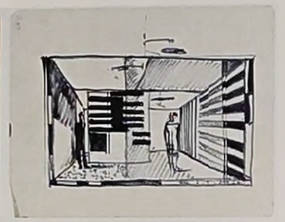
→ Group 5: John Ernest, Anthony Hill, and Denis Williams. As an homage to Constructivist art made between 1913 and 1923, this installation included reproductions of works by Kasimir Malevich and Wladimir Tatlin, in addition to architectural models by the group's members.

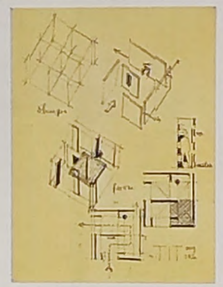
→ Group 6: Nigel Henderson, Eduardo Paolozzi, Alison Smithson, and Peter Smithson. Titled *Patio and Pavilion*, this project consisted of a central wooden structure (partial view, left) surrounded by a sand patio littered with found objects.

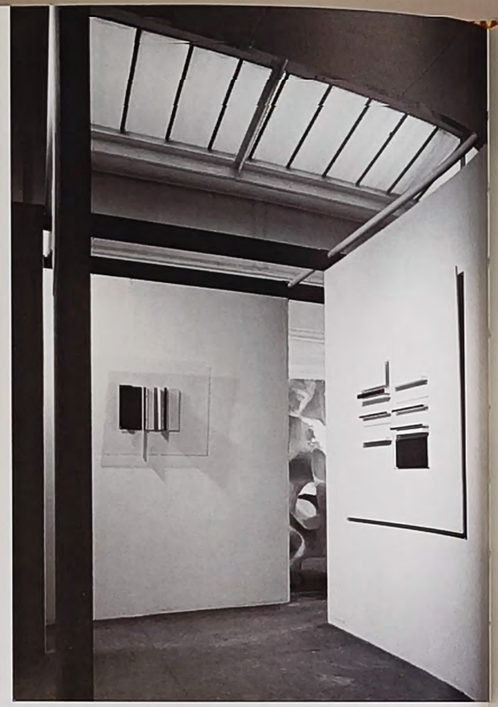


← Group 6: Architects Peter and Alison Smithson inside Group 6's pavilion. Below an opaque corrugated plastic ceiling, the interior of the pavilion contained *Head of a Man*, a photocollage by Henderson; a sand floor; and a bench with a bugle, a pistol, and other objects on top of it.

↓ Group 6: A wide band of reflective aluminum enclosed the patio; the floor was covered with tiles, bricks, stones, and found objects, including an old shoe, a broken pot, and a clock face.







↞↞ Preparatory drawings by Ernö Goldfinger for the installation by Group 7.

↞ Group 7: Ernö Goldfinger, Victor Pasmore, and Helen Phillips. Pasmore's reliefs, shown here, were placed on the walls of the 4 × 4-foot (1.2 × 1.2-meter) cube.

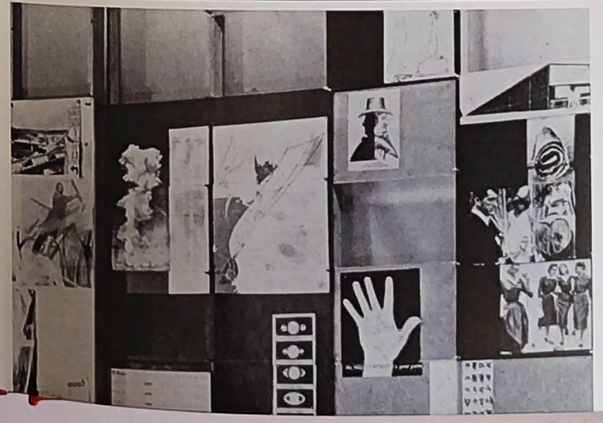
↟ Group 8: Richard Matthews, Michael Pine, and James Stirling. This white papier-mâché sculpture was a three-dimensional manifestation of photographic studies of soap bubbles that were exhibited alongside it. (Group 8 statement, p. 367.)

↘ Group 9: Kenneth Martin, Mary Martin, and John Weeks. The installation consisted of three panels assembled in the form of an equilateral triangle. Each panel was bisected by an additional panel. Kenneth Martin's bronze mobile hung in the center of the structure.

↓ Group 10: Robert Adams, Peter Carter, Frank Newby, and Colin St. John Wilson. A narrow corridor lined with cylinders, cones, and other geometric shapes culminated in an Adams-designed sculpture made of concave aluminum sheets.

↘↘ Group 11: Adrian Heath and John Weeks. This installation consisted of a free-standing wall of concrete blocks.

↓↓ Group 12: Lawrence Alloway, Geoffrey Holroyd, and Toni del Renzio. This group presented a bulletin board that displayed found images, including magazine spreads. As explained in the catalog, the group considered the bulletin board "a convenient method of organizing the modern visual continuum."



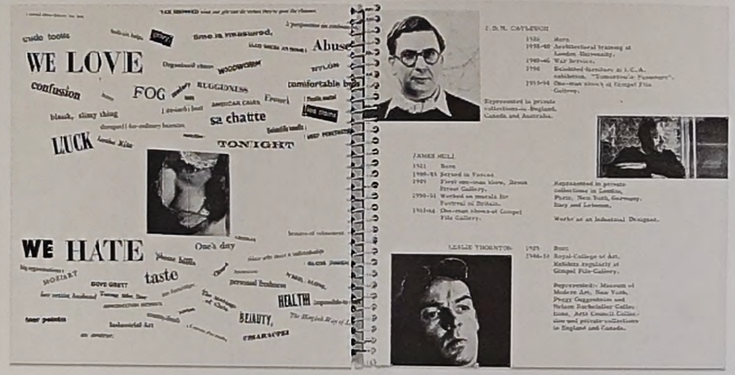
← Cover of the catalog for "This Is Tomorrow," designed by Edward Wright, 1956. Wright, a member of Group 1, was a professor of typography at the Royal College of Art, London, at the time of the exhibition. Wright asked each group to submit a statement, a diagram of their project, self-portraits, and one other image. More than 1,400 copies were sold, at a price of 5 shillings each.

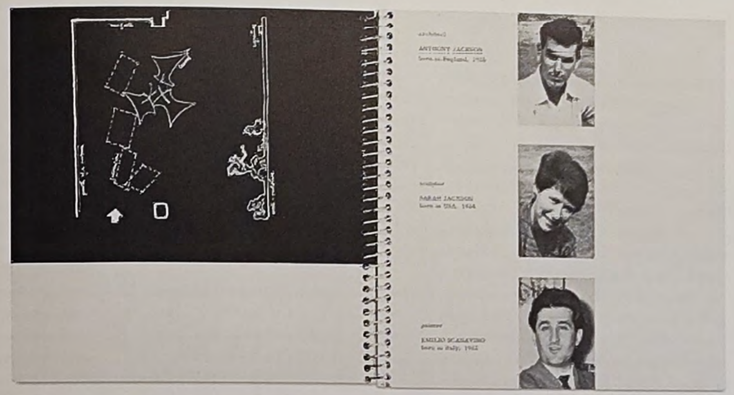
↓ and ↓↓ Catalog entry from Group 3.

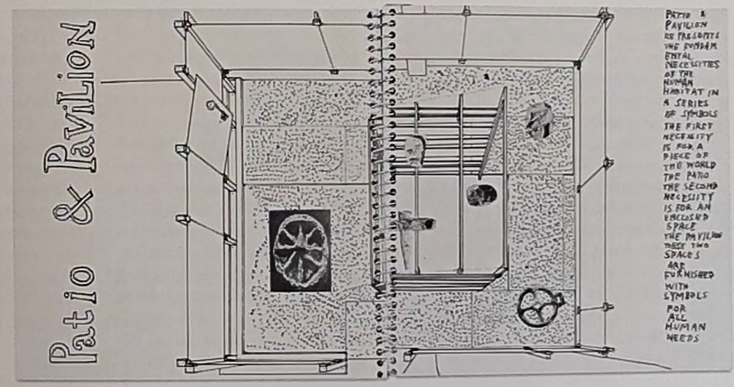
→ Catalog entry from Group 4.

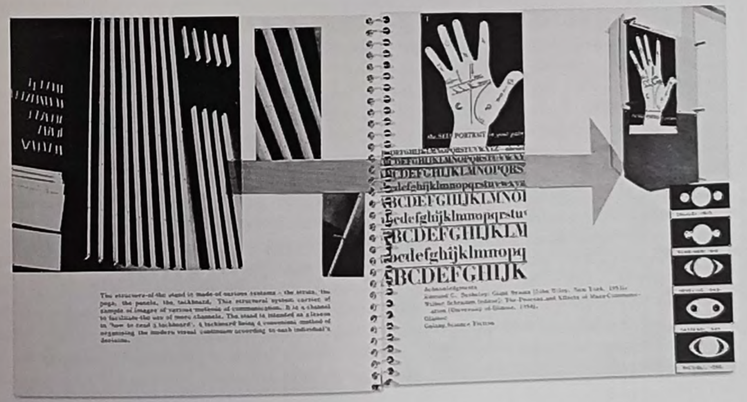
↘ Catalog entry from Group 6.

↘↘ Catalog entry from Group 12.






Patio & Pavilion
PATIO & PAVILION REPRESENTS THE FOUR BASIC EMOTIONAL NECESSITIES OF THE HUMAN HABITAT IN A SERIES OF SYMBOLS. THE FIRST NECESSITY IS FOR A PIECE OF THE WORLD. THE PATIO. THE SECOND NECESSITY IS FOR AN ENCLOSED SPACE. THE PAVILION. THESE TWO SPACES ARE FURNISHED WITH SYMBOLS FOR ALL HUMAN NEEDS



"This Is Tomorrow: At the Whitechapel Art Gallery, 9 August–9 September 1956"
[press release]
LAWRENCE ALLOWAY
London, 1956

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Spontaneously and democratically organised, THIS IS TOMORROW is an exhibition to prove a point. Leading British artists and architects of the younger generation have pooled their talents to prove that the ability of painters, sculptors, architects and designers to work harmoniously together did not die out with the cathedral builders or the Georgian interior decorators—as older critics and Royal Academicians maintain—but is flourishing still.

Banded together in groups of three or more, they have taken over areas of the Whitechapel Gallery's empty floor space, on which to create whatever structures they please. No aesthetic programme was imposed (none could have been agreed); no particular style was expected of the groups. They got together on a basis of old acquaintance, or to put over a new idea, to exploit a new approach to the visual arts. Every group has seen its potentialities differently, has used its opportunities according to its own lights.

As a result, THIS IS TOMORROW gives a startling foretaste of the diversity and enormous range of the Art of the Future. It ranges from orthodox abstract art, with its classical regularity and rational order, through room-size sculptures to walk through, to crazy-house structures plastered with pin-up images from the popular press. Behind this variety of appearances lies a whole gamut of aesthetic theories, from formal studies refined by two thousand years of enquiry and research, to spit-new approaches based on Communication Theory and the strange mathematics of Topology. And again and again, the visitor will find the emphasis and the pride of achievement thrown back on himself, that the Art of The Future is for him to choose, for him to participate in, the doors of the Ivory Tower are open wide.

THIS IS TOMORROW will also preview the Artists of the Future, for the collaborators who have pooled their resources are mostly in their early thirties, rising talent on the threshold of their creative maturity, with international reputations just in the making, or about to be made. And they come from all over the Home Counties and the Commonwealth: Sculptors come from Glasgow, Edinburgh, Northampton, Sheffield; architects from the Midlands and the length of the East Coast, and so on. No single exhibition since the Festival has given so wide a survey of British creative power in the arts, made so wide a sampling of creeds and methods, nor offered the visitor so full a range of aesthetic experience.

This Is Tomorrow [exh. cat.]
"Introduction 1: Design as a Human Activity"
LAWRENCE ALLOWAY
London, 1956

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An exhibition called This Is Tomorrow—devoted to the possibilities of collaboration between architects, painters, and sculptors—might appear to be setting up a programme for the future. There are powerful precedents for placing art in a time-perspective that relies on the future to complete it. Early modern art is full of theories concerning the integration of all the arts, with realisation of the ideals scheduled for another time. But yesterday's tomorrow is not today—and the ideal of symbiotic art architecture has not been achieved.

The obstacles are socio-psychological and aesthetic. For a start, it would be realistic to replace the ideal picture of collaboration (derived from a rosy fiction of the middle ages) by the notion of antagonistic cooperation. The patterns of dominance and submission, of prestige and intrigue, that attend every human group cannot be suspended from the special world of the arts. This factual estimate of the changing patterns of human groups precludes ideal solutions of permanent validity.

The exhibits in This Is Tomorrow can be viewed as display stands of ideas and the principles they symbolise are varied not unified. The independent competing groups do not agree on any universal design principles. This is the aesthetic difficulty about the idea of integration of the arts. It is continually opposed by the variety of human aims and performances. Although there are exhibits in the present show which testify to their designers' belief in the existence of unifying forms and rhythms common to objects of different use and structure, the universal has to compete on equal terms with other principles.

That this variety is not due simply to the permissive terms of reference of the exhibition is clear from the early history of This Is Tomorrow. It developed out of the failure of a proposal to hold an exhibition organised on the lines of orthodox integration recommended by la groupe espace in Paris. The English artists and architects would not submit to the dogmatic ideas of synthesis held by la groupe espace. We can take it, then, that the variety and complexity of this exhibition is not accidental but part of the present design situation in England.

Common to all the groups is a suspension of the supposed purity of their respective specialisms which enables them to aim at simultaneous mastery of several channels of communication. The traditional opponent of the purity of art is the Gesamtkunstwerk, the totalwork—such as Wagnerian opera. However, in this exhibition, there is the desire to experiment in various channels without submitting to the idea of a synthesis in which the separate contributions are sympathetically bound together. On the contrary, here different channels are allowed to compete as well as complement each other, just as, it was suggested, the members of antagonistic cooperative groups compete.

A result of this exhibition is to oppose the specialisation of the arts. J. Huizinga in *Homo Ludens* wrote that 'art language differs from ordinary speech in that it employs special terms, images, figures'. These special terms, though useful under certain conditions, are not the world and if adhered to unthinkingly can interfere with the spectator's reception of the work of art. Purity of media, golden proportions, unambiguous iconologies, have been so powerful that we have contracted art and architecture down to very narrow fields. An exhibition like this is, on the contrary, a lesson in spectatorship, which cuts across the learned responses of conventional perception. In This Is Tomorrow the visitor is exposed to space effects, play with signs, a wide range of materials and structures, which, taken together, make of art and architecture a many-channeled activity, as factual and far from ideal standards as the street outside.

The effect described above is an attempt to approximate the viewing conditions of the visitor to the exhibition, the biggest show about design and ways of life since the MARS group exhibition in 1937. This spectator will have to receive, in addition to the overall effect, the competing messages of the dozen exhibits for, of course, the intentions of the individual groups differ from any total effect. The exhibits are the result of choices made under ordinary human conditions and not manifestations of universal laws. The freedom of the artist and architects concerned is communicated to the spectator who cannot rely on the learned responses called up by a picture in a frame, a house in a street, words on a page. As he circulates the visitor will have to adjust to the character of each exhibit (a walk through four cubes versus the sight of human symbols in a pavilion, and so on). This is a reminder of the responsibility of the spectator in the reception and interpretation of the many messages in the communications network of the whole exhibition.

Group 1 Statement
THEO CROSBY, GERMANO FACETTI, WILLIAM TURNBULL, AND EDWARD WRIGHT

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The elements of this exhibition are not only the concern of the artist; they are yours.

We share the same visual environment; we are all in the same boat.

In this section we are attempting to define our aims by using simply and directly certain materials which we consider constituent elements in current production. The space-deck roof is a prefabricated system, every strut is interdependent, and loads are resolved and distributed over the whole area. The space is modulated by plastic sheets, block-board and plywood, all mass-produced materials, and decoration is achieved by photographic techniques or by a collage of printed elements. Within this mass-produced environment the sculpture represents the imprecise yet recognisable image of the irrational and of chance; non-utilitarian yet necessary, they focus the environment and are the poetic equivalent of man.

Architecture is not something just to keep the rain out, painting is not for covering the cracks in the walls, or sculpture a traffic obstacle of a general on a horse.

They are forces acting on our lives.

Each new excavation is another step into the future.

Sculpture used to look 'modern'; now we make objects that might have been dug up at any time during the past forty thousand years.

Sculpture = totemic object. It can exist inside or outside architectural space.

Sculpture is not architectural stage property.

Art objects are the result of activity necessary to people called artists.

Modern architecture is frequently the sum total of a number of possible permutations; so too is a great deal of modern sculpture and painting.

The observer or user is one of the units.

We can also look up at the fish and down at the birds.

Things are the sum total of their quantities. A bird no longer permitted to fly is no longer a bird.

Ultimate motion is ultimate rest.

This area introduces the visitor to the exhibition and here the group acknowledges its gratitude to many individuals who co-operated generously with funds and material.

Group 2 Statement
RICHARD HAMILTON, JOHN MCHALE, AND JOHN VOELCKER

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Are They Cultured?

We resist the kind of activity which is primarily concerned with the creation of style. We reject the notion that 'tomorrow' can be expressed through the presentation of rigid formal concepts. Tomorrow can only extend the range of the present body of visual experience. What is needed is not a definition of meaningful imagery but the development of our perceptive potentialities to accept and utilize the continual enrichment of visual material.

RH

Tomorrow may only be extrapolated on the basis of certain assumptions about the practical accepted reality of today and yesterday. At a point in human affairs where the actual nature of such reality as traditionally evidenced by the senses is under question, to depict tomorrow in the guise of today's artifacts, perceived and embroidered according to our present assumptions about their relevance to man, becomes pointless. Any change in man's environment is indicative of a change in a man's relation to it, in his actual mode of perceiving and symbolising his interaction with it.

Therefore we are concerned simply with underlining the discrepancy between physical fact and perception of that fact, and the ways in which this discrepancy may be so magnified by traditional attitudes and assumptions as to obscure the significance of the factual reality.

This by presenting a complex of sense experience which is so organised, or disorganised, as to provoke acute awareness of our sensory function in an environmental situation.

JM

Tomorrow is shut up in today and yesterday. This Instant is the starting point. To know this instant is a proof of life. Surroundings contact senses. Tomorrow is released when experiences of instants past contact this instant, here, now. Tomorrow and the day after that, and that, and that, are anticipations of further contact.

JV

Group 8 Statement
RICHARD MATTHEWS, MICHAEL PINE, AND JAMES STIRLING

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Why clutter up your building with 'pieces' of sculpture when the architect can make his medium so exciting that the need for sculpture will be done away with and its very presence nullified.

The painting is as obsolete as the picture rail. Architecture, one of the practical arts, has, along with the popular arts deflated the position of painters, sculptors,—the fine arts.

The ego maniac in the attic has at last starved himself to death.

If the fine arts cannot recover the vitality of the research artists of the 20's (who through the magazines generated a vocabulary for the practical arts), then the artist must become a consultant, just as the engineer or quantity surveyor is to the architect, though their relationship to the specialist, e.g. industrial designer or furniture maker, would be more intimate for they would be directly concerned with conception.

James Stirling

The Artist feels the loss of vitality in the formal expressions of Art, and realises that his work is more than the satisfaction of a personal and emotional requirement.

The elements of painting and sculpture have already lost a sense of descriptive function or intentional indication of scale.

They can be extended in size, shape or role and in the process of interpretation these are only determined by the superimposition of a finger, a human figure or a crowd.

The single element extends by implication from the smallest constructed part, to Architecture and to the whole environment without clear individual demarcation.

Michael Pine

A total sense of environment will only be brought about by people themselves wanting it. Architects, painters and sculptors can only help by developing together their means of expression to act as a stimulus to this end, and not by working in a formalist vacuum. This means of expression has already been increased in painting and sculpture through the breaking down of conventional form (elsewhere modern musicians are doing the same). This type of disruption is only about to take place in architecture—the wall at least is beginning to go. The next step will be with the volume of the building, which at present is based on structural geometry. Schwitters' ideal was a cathedral of wood filled with wheels—the static volume disrupted into a dynamic one by implication, for wheels are always revolving even when they are not being propelled. Finally the total plastic expression (architecture, painting, sculpture) will be in the landscape with no fixed composition but made up of people, volumes, components—in the way that trees, all different, all growing, all disrupted into each other, are brought together in an integrated clump.

Richard Matthews

"Architect and Artist: Ideal Realized"

ANONYMOUS

Times — London, 9 August 1556

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Twelve groups of architects, sculptors, and painters have worked together for over a year to produce the works that make up the exhibition "This Is Tomorrow" at the Whitechapel Art Gallery. Each group presents a composite exhibit indicating an approach to the problem of collaboration between artist and architect.

Collaboration of this kind has been one of the dearest ideals of the modern movement in art, at least of that side of it that has believed the easel picture and the gallery sculpture to be extinct and has considered that in the future art must not be about an environment but must create an environment. Any tendency towards a synthesis based on collaboration of this kind between the more vigorous and imaginative of our artists is, of course, of immediate importance to the general public, however highbrow it looks at the moment it is bound sooner or later to reflect upon the world of houses, cars, and clothes, the world outside art. This makes the present exhibition particularly important.

There is no over-all unanimity in the exhibition. However, two distinct tendencies are revealed both by the exhibits and the contributions which each group has made to a sumptuous catalogue. On the one hand a number of collaborations have brought sculpture and architecture together in genuine synthesis. These works aspire to an ideal style, a conscious purity of form.

PAVILION WITH SCULPTURE

The refined and exquisite pavilion with sculpture of Messrs. Ernö Goldfinger, Victor Pasmore, and Miss Helen Phillips, the tribute to Le Corbusier of Messrs. Robert Adams, Frank Newby, Peter Carter, and St. John Wilson, the deceptively simple wall designed by Mr. Adrian Heath and Mr. John Weeks in which a subtle counterpoint of solids and voids, projections and recessions is built up from the single unit of a cement block, and, above all, the mobile of Mr. Kenneth Martin, set in its open framework of screens, a group in which the lines of the mobile and the surfaces of the screens unfold according to a perfect and refined order, all these exhibits aspire to the 'new plastic reality' that Mondrian wrote about.

Against these formally coherent and discrete works of art are to be set a number of exhibits whose purpose is the exact opposite. The interest of their designers, if one interprets them correctly, centres on the relationship between the onlooker and the world at large rather than between him and the qualities of a work of art. The work is significant as a symbol, not a form: thus the material brought into play in, for instance, something like a highbrow's fairground booth prepared by Mr. John McHale and Mr. Richard Hamilton can include cinema films, posters, photographs, press cuttings, a van Gogh reproduction and any other fragment of the world outside art.

The picture of to-morrow that is offered here by-passes style and is concerned with the onlooker's increasing power to 'read' and make sense of his surroundings. Understandably, this faction has little to offer visually: Piccadilly Circus and one's own eyes can do better than Messrs. McHale and Hamilton's box of tricks, which dilutes rather than concentrates the vivid sensations of the street. However, the ideas involved are expressed with clarity and wit in an exhibit and catalogue entry prepared by Messrs. Lawrence Alloway, Toni del Renzio, and Geoffrey Holroyd and no less powerfully in a rather daunting poem by Mr. Reyner Banham which forms the second introduction to the catalogue.

Unlike anything else in its richness and originality as well as its absolute clarity of purpose is the patio and pavilion with sculpture made by Mr. and Mrs. Smithson, Mr. Eduardo Paolozzi, and Mr. Nigel Henderson. Here there is no polemical purpose; instead, the human and aesthetic issues with which the exhibition is concerned are symbolized with extraordinary imagination and authority.

"This Is Yesterday"

ANONYMOUS

Times Educational Supplement — London, 17 August 1956

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At the Whitechapel Art Gallery can be seen one of the most entertaining exhibitions London has had for a while. As he enters, the visitor must take care to avoid bumping into a transparent sheet of multicoloured plastic. To his right, he sees with some surprise an enormous collage compounded of various parts of the anatomy of some well-known stars of CinemaScope, below which the younger inhabitants of the East End stand transfixed for long periods before a gleaming high-fidelity juke-box whose Davy Crockett record is in constant demand. As he edges uncertainly past a more than life-size photograph of a face inviting him to 'beware of Shutitis,' he hears raucous monosyllables being giggled into a microphone labelled 'Speak' by yet another group of fascinated children. He almost loses his balance as he finds that the floor-surface has suddenly become foam rubber.

After that the exhibition becomes comparatively orthodox in its examples of the 'collaboration between artists, painters and sculptors,' which it is designed to illustrate. The authors of an abstract expressionist bas-relief screen tell us in the catalogue that they love tea-stains, ruggedness and deep penetration, but hate Mozart, advice and personal freshness. A so-called patio is filled with junk arranged on a sandy floor; a battered hunting-horn, the dial of a clock, and a season ticket from Balham to Euston are among the *objets trouvés* which, one feels, would be best *perdus*. The final section in this stimulating miscellany is a wall of concrete blocks, some of which stick out sideways so as to demonstrate 'how an aesthetic intention can be expressed.'

The title of the exhibition, which is on show until September 9, is "This Is Tomorrow." Certainly there are ideas here which one hopes will enliven architecture and interior decoration in years to come; indeed many of them already adorn London coffee bars. But there are many things which only confirm the sad truth that London always lags behind Paris in the appreciation of the arts. The overwhelming impression is one of *déjà vu*. The salutary shocks of the Surrealists, the austere patterns of the Constructivists, and the iconoclastic messes of the Dadaists all recur at Whitechapel, with the difference that most of the artists are English. This is yesterday.

"Yesterday, Certainly: Tomorrow, Perhaps"

BASIL TAYLOR

Spectator — London, 17 August 1956

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At least this can be simply said of the complicated and demanding exhibition ingeniously inserted into the Whitechapel Art Gallery and called "This Is Tomorrow"—that it contains a sequence of twelve small self-contained displays produced in almost every case by a collaborative architect-painter-sculptor team, although the exhibition as a whole challenges in one way or another the autonomy of these vocations and their traditional territories. There are also contributions, both in the catalogue and on the floor, from a number of publicists, one of whom aspires ponderously to verse in the manner of E. E. Cummings. In spite of its title, the presence of Robby the Robot and references to cybernetics, the show has a strong whiff of the past rather than the future; it stands in rather the same relationship to the twentieth century that Roger Fry's 1911 exhibition did to the nineteenth, for most of the exhibits and the manifestos they illustrate represent ideas and attitudes which were hot in the Twenties and even earlier. Ten years after the Nineteen-Forties war it reflects what was most advanced immediately after the Nineteen-Tens war, namely the Constructivist-Bauhaus-De Stijl positions and the various expressions of the spirit called Dadaist. The show is pervaded by nostalgia, like those current writings about a jazz which was originally on the boil more than three decades ago, and one of the portrait-group photographs in the catalogue seems to emulate those photographic documents of the beginning of the modern movement.

In this respect, the exhibition is typical of the historical bias of our post-war period, for as Herbert Luthy has written in a recent essay on Brecht, 'We draw new life out of old graves and not only out of old ones but from fresh ones too—even out of the kind the Bible refers to as whited sepulchres.' I make this point simply in order to indicate that visitors should not expect, in international terms, a very advanced exhibition. It is thoroughly interesting and worth attention because the people concerned represent a concentration of energy and growth, even if some of them do not suggest a positive fruitfulness but rather some appendix in the body of contemporary art. The exhibition also suffers from being in essence a series of manifestos, many of which are far less convincing than what the artists would produce on the job. Some of them seem to be most concerned to clear a little living space for themselves or shout out their identity; some of the statements would serve as the passing currency of studio argument, but look unconvincing and defensive in print.

If collaboration is one of the exhibition's motives, a deep, wide fissure of antagonism divides it, as I have already implied by writing the words Constructivism and Dadaism into the same sentence. The fact that certain of the groups can exist at all under the same roof is a reminder of the Thirties here, when non-figurative artists and Surrealists bedded together in the pages of the *London Bulletin*; I wish that the Reith Lectures could have come a bit later so that Dr. Pevsner could have run his gauges of Englishness over this show. The 'Dadaists,' whose contributions I will review in a second article, are provocative, exhibitionist, combative, opportunist—I use the words descriptively—popularist. To them Plato is a dirty word—like peace to an aggressor—and they are scared to be caught wearing any values or anxious, if they are, to call them fancy dress. By contrast the Constructivists cultivate lucidity, refinement, tidiness, modesty, a cool, Platonist, forward-looking, undemonstrative moralistic attitude. Their apposition of the two makes the gallery into a mind-shaking sequence of fairgrounds and monasteries.

The Constructivist philosophy, with its denial of representation in any degree and its measured impersonality, automatically removes many of the causes of discord between architect, painter and sculptor. Since the periods when a single ideology united the three, they have been divided because painting and sculpture were representational arts and architecture was not, and in the last two centuries by the cult of individualism and romantic sincerity. The display by Ernö Goldfinger, Victor Pasmore and Helen Philips, which aims to show how the painter and sculptor, in this case through colour, relief construction and a hanging wooden sculpture, can modulate and energise the space created by an architect, is the most mature, confident and persuasive example of the Constructivist ideal of co-partnership and one in which Pasmore's infinitely fragile and sensitive talent predominates. The only display not to include an architect shows work by Anthony Hill, John Ernest and Denis Williams, and this has an overtly historical character not only because it includes a useful account of the development of Constructivism but because the work, lacking personality and force of form and imagery, is a series of projects and propositions. On the other hand the directional space which has been so modestly presented by Robert Adams, Frank Newby, Peter Carter and St. John Wilson, offers, through this architect-engineer-sculptor collaboration, one of the most arresting images of the show. The future of Constructivism must, I believe, depend upon this kind of partnership which we have hardly begun to explore or organise, but one cannot help remembering that in a contracting society like ours, in a state of economic instability, flexibility of thinking and technological inventiveness are essential to tomorrow's architecture. In this respect the collaborations of John Weeks with

Adrian Heath and with Kenneth and Mary Martin have a special interest.

Constructivism is a philosophy of art and an orthodoxy. To those like myself, who sympathise with its intentions and many of its achievements without subscribing exclusively to its creeds, it must seem to disregard certain inescapable human and therefore artistic impulses, needs and cravings. It is such requirements which other parts of this exhibition seek to consider; I hope to consider them next week.

"Divorce of Two Minds"

PIERRE ROUVE

Art News and Review — London, 18 August 1956

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At the Whitechapel Art Gallery it is again manifesto-time. Bursting with brave intelligence, a vast show sets forth to 'oppose the specialisation of the arts.' It proposes to do so by imposing a highly specialised aesthetic theory which may or may not be more than the raw material of the time honoured Experimental Psychology. It is all done with compelling good faith, youthful assurance and provocative intolerance. But then crusaders have never been open minded. Their strength has always resided in their fascination by one belief that they manage somehow to invest with the regalia of the One and Only Truth. And it is to this gush of fighting spirit in the stale air of conformism that we must pay our tribute, even if we are obviously too uneducated and too old fashioned to grasp the foundations of the Cause.

We must also praise without reservation the intention to extract from life, and to replunge into life, a new category of forms. That these forms will appear arbitrary to those who measure life with the yardsticks of kitchen sinks and espresso bars is only to be expected. Any attempt to rejuvenate the impact of new forms on our daily experiences is bound to be a struggle on the double front of conventional 'realism' and the equally conventional 'modernism.' The exhibition at the Whitechapel Art Gallery tries to fight this double battle. If it occasionally fails, it is because the aim of the collaboration between the sculptors and architects fails precisely to 'communicate' with life and moves only along the 'channels' of gratuity that lead back to Dada and from there straight into the formalist wilderness where man and art shall never meet.

This must not be mistaken for a plea for some kind of outdated humanism. It is merely the expression of the necessity of a direct and sincere link between the formal evolution of art and the evolution of life. And it is what seems to me a misconception of the nature of this link that throws off balance this otherwise well-intentioned exhibition.

It is true, and it is worth stressing again and again, that the perception of sculptural and architectonic forms should follow the same psycho-physiological 'channels.' It is equally true that all forms are not only a matter of vision, but also a matter of thought: the Florentines called five centuries ago 'cosa mentale' what the present day theory chooses to term 'encoding' and 'decoding.' It is equally true that architects, lost in their calculations, chained by their clients, all too often seem inclined (or forced) to relegate in the background the visual coherence of their work, which we perceive according to the same rules that we apply to our acceptance of sculpture. But to bring this visual concern into the foreground does not mean to assimilate sculpture to architecture, as this exhibition seems to do, mistaking perception (which is indeed the same in both cases) with rational evaluation (which is bound to be different).

Sculpture can rely on its visual self-sufficiency for a valid link with life; the very nature of its inner dynamics, off the interplay of voids and volumes is enough to reflect a time and a mood. If architecture is to be brought together with sculpture, then the most one could say is that architecture is a *sculpture with a purpose*. It is this purpose, coupled with its formal incarnation, that links architecture with life. A purposeless building is a logical nonsense and a historical cheat that only conjures memories of Dadaism, the most damaging fancy of modern artists, based on the criminal assumption that art must be divorced from life. Against the advocates of purposeless architecture, I submit that the only valid demarcation line between the activity of the artist and the activity of the architect is the awareness of such a purpose behind the quest for new forms. And unfortunately, the architectural exhibits at the Whitechapel Art Gallery are in the majority hybrid forms, too devoid of inner strength to be authentic sculpture and too aimless to be architectural concepts. The 'antagonistic co-operation' so intelligently sensed by Lawrence Alloway has degenerated into an almost general unconditional surrender of the architects to their formalistic fancies. There are perhaps a few exceptions in the teams including Cosby, Voelker, Carter and Wilson: there the architectural thought has not been diverted by arbitrary juggling with peaceful structural elements forced much against their will to look like something different from a 'wall.' A similar strain on naturally modest imaginations has led others into false sophistication, swinging from bric à brac 'with a message' to mere screens with ludicrous decoration.

In this whirlwind, the sculptors emerge triumphant, though much care has been taken to make impossible the isolated contemplation of their works. But what had been conceived as a continuous flow of 'communication' between exhibits and spectators has been broken in a machine gun succession of isolated messages, that even the most advanced decoding machine would be unable to cope with—let alone the sight and the brain of the uninitiated.

But in spite of this partial failure to produce a balanced and entirely convincing compound, this exhibition must be rated as one of the most intriguing in recent years. Its merit is to put the question of the inter-related impact of sculpture and architecture and to call for a re-evaluation of many of our ideas on building and decoration that are still a Victorian skeleton scantily dressed with second-hand Bauhaus garments. The intention of "This is to-morrow," in spite of its prophetic ring, is to make us more aware of what we must do to-day in order to avoid the repetition of what has happened yesterday in Dessau or in Zurich. And in art, an intention is often historically and socially as valid as an achievement. Only Aesthetics, the merciless, calls for perfection. (But this again is probably only an evidence of my conventional, limited, outlived, outmoded way of thinking that makes it impossible for me to grasp the happy 'marriage of two minds.' It may be there, of course, like the ghost in the spiritualist seances. But I dismally failed to 'communicate.')

"Dada"

BASIL TAYLOR

Spectator — London, 24 August 1956

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Having last week reviewed the Constructivist displays in the "This Is Tomorrow" exhibition at Whitechapel, I turn now to the 'Dadaist' contributions, so called because they revive the tone, the spirit and some of the ideas from that series of manifestations and its antecedents. One group (Catleugh—Hull—Thornton) showing their painting and sculpture present a Futurist-cum-Vorticist statement (WE LOVE: 1,132 m.p.h., a 40-inch bust, etc.; WE HATE: The teachings of Christ, the English way of life, etc.) in the mixed and asymmetrical typography of Dadaism and need reminding that Mafeking, with other Victorian strongholds, *has* been relieved. Alison and Peter Smithson have built an elegant hut in an enclosure as a sign of Man's need for shelter and living space and Eduardo Paolozzi has stocked it with some real *objets trouvés* (a season ticket from Balham, bicycle wheels, etc.) and some extremely pretty and sophisticated hand-made ones with an ancient, dug-up look as symbols for human needs, the mixture of the two types being a strange meeting between the proletarian and the aristocratic. One is reminded of the Dadaist Kurt Schwitters who retrieved every sort of street litter and made from it collages; they had a forceful and natural directness while Paolozzi's huge 'collage' is somehow precious and History of Arty.

Another display (Hamilton—McHale—Voelcker) teases the eye amusingly with a series of illusions and offers us an anthology of modern visual experiences from the cinema, publicity and so on, while Holloway [Holroyd], del Renzio and Alloway are apprentices to present that current sorcery, Communications Research, and offer it as means to reuniting art and architecture. Both these teams present their ideas in that particular mid-Atlantic lingo, a kind of intellectual Peter Cheyney, as much dependent upon the vocabulary of American technology for their effect as British pop singers are on the short 'a.' The romanticism of these exhibits finds its promised land in the United States where conditions are as remote from ours as a Bedouin camp was from the Romantic Paris of the 1820s. Their heroes are the mass-media and advertising experts, the pulp-magazine writers and Professor Wiener. Flirtation with the highest mathematics mixed with Popular Science and Science Fiction results not in science but scientism, science as myth and not as actuality. This latest romanticism is tied to sociology and group-psychology and leaves the same irritating impression as an earlier show of popular art at this gallery—Black Eyes and Lemonade—of a sophisticated toying with unsophisticated responses.

"A Shaft from Apollo's Bow: This Is To-morrow—or Is It?" [excerpt]

ANONYMOUS

Apollo — London, September 1956

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The exhibition at Whitechapel under the prophetic title "This Is To-morrow" adds a new horror to longevity. The idea, so far as my depressingly normal intelligence could grasp it, was that eleven groups of architect-sculptor-painter had come together to fill that number of sections of the gallery made maze-like to accommodate them with 'artefacts' which indicate how they will create the human environment just as soon as they are given the opportunity. Whenever I see the word 'artefact' I know what's coming to me, and this was more artefactual than anything I have yet seen. What, for example, is one to make of a wall surface of approximately a hundred square feet into which hundreds of 4-inch square-headed nails have been driven so that they stick out about three and a half inches in a meandering river of rusty metal several inches wide serpentining down and across the surface, encountering in their journey a cloud of wire-wool upon which an outsize pine-cone swings perilously? The three creators of this, in the piece of the catalogue given to them, explain in printing at all angles sprawled all over the page, that among other things, they LOVE: 'gravy, tea-stains, a 40-inch bust . . .' This undergraduate obscenity and blasphemy may be taken in juxtaposition with the fact that the head of those who have given financial aid to the affair is the Arts Council of Great Britain. Which only shows how tolerant the English way of life is, and how well the Arts Council spend our money for us.

This exhibition, like Shadwell in Dryden's poem, 'never deviates into sense.' Perhaps some of the constructional abstracts of Victor Pasmore show a certain tidiness. One might have feared that the menace of the future was in a streamlined fictionalism which left no place for any grace-note of art in human living. Not at all. Everything is amorphous, every surface is messed up with lumps of plaster or concrete or something, usually in dirty shades of grey or mud-colour. Whole walls are covered with bits and pieces of magazines, newspapers and cinema posters stuck on haphazard and with lots of bits of naked girls among them. The studio and dealers' name for this is 'collage' and I must agree that it sounds important that way. But it isn't: like the rest it is just an untidy mess with a slight nasty-mindedness about it. Any exception, such as the walls of a synthetic material called 'Bellrock' and another of variously shaped concrete blocks demonstrated by an architect, John Weeks, transports us into another world where use and practicability operate. The rest, from an ill-balanced lump of plaster on the top of another shapeless column of plaster in the entrance hall, throughout the whole show, is pretentious bunk, which could only impose on the naïve mind of a member of one of the government-subsidised 'Councils' for the promotion of culture at home or abroad, or a gallery director with a fear-neurosis of not being 'in the swim,' which is an occupational disease of these entrenched bureaucrats.

Incidentally a word should be said of the catalogue. It costs five shillings. It is, of course, loose-leaf bound with one of those horrible spiral coils of plastic which have every conceivable disadvantage from the viewpoint of any book-lover. It is very shy of capital letters, and typographically is based entirely on the principle of being different, however silly that difference is. Moreover, it is completely unintelligible in the highfalutin style, which means exactly nothing in words of seven syllables. So the mystified visitor need not look for any help in that direction.

May I add that quite ceaselessly a juke-box (that beloved tune creator sacred to the pin-table saloon) screams the poorest kind of popular contemporary music, punctuated by barbaric yawps and squeals which came, I believe, from a contraption bidding one 'Speak' into a speaking-tube nearby. This ensured pandemonium. I did not stop to discover whether among the records was: 'O Death, where is Thy Sting.'

"This Is Tomorrow"

REYNER BANHAM

Architectural Review — London, September 1956

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The synthesis of the major arts is a consecrated theme in the Modern Movement, one of the shining abstractions that gather, halo-wise, about the heads of its Masters, though it has been left most-

ly to their followers to thrash out the practicalities that stand between wish and achievement. The most used threshing-floor so far has been CIAM, but a new and most instructive one has been provided lately by the exhibition, unfortunately labelled "This Is Tomorrow," which continues at the Whitechapel Gallery until September 9.

Collaboration between practitioners of the different arts was its only set programme; its aesthetics were entirely permissive, and anything could, in theory, have been done. The results were inevitably diverse, but so were the premises from which different groups of collaborators worked. Even the idea of synthesis was interpreted, at one extreme, simply as a requirement to house or decorate one another's work, and at the other extreme, as an invitation to smash all boundaries between the arts, to treat them all as modes of communicating experience from person to person, . . . as the Holroyd–Alloway–del Renzio group did—modes that could embrace all the available channels of human perception, as set out in a table . . . which appeared in the catalogue entry for the Voelcker–Hamilton–McHale section.

But even if the concept is as wide and fluid as this, practical considerations tend to reduce the means employed to a set of recognizable elements, classifiable under the heads of Structure, Plasticity, Symbol and Sign, even if pictures were merely hung on a wall these four elements were all employed, if only accidentally.

Some concept of structure—geometry clothed in substance—proved to be the basic or unifying postulate of most groups' offerings, and in one case, the partnership of John Weeks and Adrian Heath, structure was the totality of the exhibit, a wall of standard bricks which were displaced or omitted, . . . to give it the plasticity and symbolic significance of an abstract sculpture.

More complex structure-sculptures were seen in the Cattleugh–Thornton–Hull screen, . . . but a note of ambiguity, more consciously exploited in other sections, appears in the composition of curved planes on which Peter Carter, Colin St. J. Wilson and Robert Adams collaborated. Normal scale-effects are reversed, and that part which is large enough to admit a standing man . . . is clearly sculptural in feeling, while the manifestly structural element beyond is sited and displayed like a free-standing statue.

This ambiguity was part of a general feeling of broken barriers and questioned categories that constituted the most stimulating aspect of the whole exhibition. And yet the technique of category-smashing could not be used as a basis for forming value-judgments about the exhibits. Thus, the Smithson-Henderson-Paolozzi contribution showed the New Brutalists at their most submissive to traditional values. They erected a pavilion within a patio . . . and stocked it with sculptures signifying the most time-honoured of man's activities and needs. This was, in an exalted sense, a confirmation of accepted values and symbols.

Voelcker, Hamilton and McHale, on the other hand, employed optical illusions, scale reversions, oblique structures and fragmented images . . . to disrupt stock responses, and put the viewer back on a *tabula rasa* of individual responsibility for his own atomized sensory awareness of images of only local and contemporary significance. Yet, curiously, their section seemed to have more in common with that of the New Brutalists than any other, and the clue to this kinship would appear to lie in the fact that neither relied on abstract concepts, but on concrete images—images that can carry the mass of tradition and association, or the energy of novelty and technology, but resist classification by the geometrical disciplines by which most other exhibits were dominated.

* The names of the architects are given first for each group.

"This Is Tomorrow: An Exhibition at the Whitechapel Art Gallery"
THEO CROSBY
Architectural Design — London, September 1956

The continued fragmentation of the arts and the lack of a co-ordinating principle, a dominant theory to which all the arts and sciences subscribe, is characteristic of our period. It is usually ascribed to the growth of specialization and the vast increase in knowledge since the Renaissance—so vast that no man can compass more than one subject. The result of such a generalization is that specialists seldom attempt anything outside their own speciality; they see the world exclusively through their professional blinkers. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the relation of architects to other artists.

The artist has accepted, even welcomed, the idea that art is a rare and precious pursuit, needing an arduous invitation for its appreciation. The architect, within his own set of precast blinkers, sees the artist as an easily discarded decorator, whose function is to fill the gaps in the architectural conception.

The growth of the idea of integration and of equal collaboration springs, probably, from William Morris, and like all such rather tenuous concepts, it has depended on rare instances where all the parties concerned have been prepared to restrain their egos and work to a common end. This idea of partnership was taught at the Bauhaus and has been current ever since. Several architects have tried to operate such a system, but few have had the courage to invite other artists to collaborate on the same equal basis. Such a collaboration is, of course, quite remarkably difficult because of the idea that the artist is useful only at a certain stage (to produce a project for a decoration at the end of the job) and at no other time. The artist, too, is unused to thinking in terms outside his limited Art School training and is in no position to give sound advice. Thus the divergence of the arts, essentially a matter of education, is continued.

This exhibition tries to make a beginning. The architects have been somewhat humbled; the artists have in most cases much experience outside the narrow world of easel painting—many are designers and typographers, contractors and teachers—and many of the architects make paintings or sculptures.

The groups are thus not fortuitous combinations of various specialists; each member has a knowledge and appreciation of other skills.

The end result shows a considerable conflict of manner and of ideas. No rule has been arrived at, but a number of possibilities have been worked out. Both architects and artists have been concerned with the manipulation of the spaces and with volume control. Each space is a complex visual organization, each has its own message, each relates to the other spaces in sequence.

Our environment is a mess because most people have eyes that do not see; they do not feel the need for visual organization. The exhibition is evidence of attempts towards a new sort of order, a way towards that integration of the arts that must come if our culture is not merely to survive, but come truly to life.

24

The New American Painting

New York, 1959

LOCATION AND DATES
The Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53rd Street, New York, 28 May–8 September 1959

CURATOR
Dorothy C. Miller

ITINERARY
Kunsthalle, Basel, Switzerland, 19 April–26 May 1958; Galleria Civica d'Arte Moderna, Milan, 1 June–29 June 1958; Museo Nacional de Arte Contemporáneo, Madrid, 16 July–10 August 1958; Hochschule für Bildende Künste, Berlin, 1 September–1 October 1958; Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, 17 October–24 November 1958; Palais des Beaux-Arts, Brussels, 6 December 1958–4 January 1959; Musée National d'Art Moderne, Paris, 16 January–15 February 1959; Tate Gallery, London, 24 February–23 March 1959

ARTISTS
William Baziotes, James Brooks, Sam Francis, Arshile Gorky, Adolph Gottlieb, Philip Guston, Grace Hartigan, Franz Kline, Willem de Kooning, Robert Motherwell, Barnett Newman, Jackson Pollock, Mark Rothko, Theodoros Stamos, Clyfford Still, Bradley Walker Tomlin, Jack Tworkov

EXHIBITION CATALOGS
The New American Painting: As Shown in Eight European Countries 1958–1959. Introduction by Alfred H. Barr, Jr. New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1959. Catalogs for the traveling exhibitions include: *Die neue amerikanische Malerei*, Basel; *La nuova pittura americana*, Milan; *La nueva pintura americana*, Madrid; *Die neue amerikanische Malerei*, Berlin; *Jong Amerika schildert*,

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erican artists since World War II had never before been
h quantity, and it was this exhibition that made clear to
public that the center of contemporary art had shifted

ly to their followers to thrash out the practicalities that stand between wish and achievement. The most used threshing-floor so far has been CIAM, but a new and most instructive one has been provided lately by the exhibition, unfortunately labelled "This Is Tomorrow," which continues at the Whitechapel Gallery until September 9.

Collaboration between practitioners of the different arts was its only set programme; its aesthetics were entirely permissive, and anything could, in theory, have been done. The results were inevitably diverse, but so were the premises from which different groups of collaborators worked. Even the idea of synthesis was interpreted, at one extreme, simply as a requirement to house or decorate one another's work, and at the other extreme, as an invitation to smash all boundaries between the arts, to treat them all as modes of communicating experience from person to person, . . . as the Holroyd–Alloway–del Renzio group did—modes that could embrace all the available channels of human perception, as set out in a table . . . which appeared in the catalogue entry for the Voelcker–Hamilton–McHale section.

But even if the concept is as wide and fluid as this, practical considerations tend to reduce the means employed to a set of recognizable elements, classifiable under the heads of Structure, Plasticity, Symbol and Sign, even if pictures were merely hung on a wall these four elements were all employed, if only accidentally.

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Amsterdam; *La nouvelle peinture americaine*, Brussels; *Jackson Pollock et la nouvelle peinture americaine*, Paris; *The New American Painting*, London.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
Number of artists: 17
Number of works: 81
Total attendance: unknown

In addition to assembling the world's greatest collection of modern art and establishing a home for it, the Museum of Modern Art was an active propagandist, sending exhibitions of modern and contemporary art throughout the United States and abroad. In 1952 the museum created the International Program specifically to circulate shows outside the country, exporting domestic art in packages with such titles as "12 Modern American Painters and Sculptors" and "Modern Art in the United States." Intentionally or not, these traveling exhibitions played an important role in furthering the cultural objectives of the Cold War, functioning as displays of American freedom of expression set in contrast to Communist restrictions on personal autonomy.

The International Program was particularly active in the late 1950s. In 1957 it selected the American work for Brazil's São Paulo Bienal, which included a Jackson Pollock retrospective organized by poet-curator Frank O'Hara, and in 1959 it chose the thirty-four artists who represented the U.S. at Documenta II in Kassel, Germany. The show with the greatest public impact, however, was "The New American Painting," which was cast in the mold of earlier International Program efforts. In response to requests from museums in Amsterdam, Berlin, Brussels, and Milan for a substantial exhibition of advanced painting and sculpture, the museum assigned the job to Dorothy C. Miller, the curator of collections, whose important series of contemporary American shows at MoMA were characterized by elegant and in-depth installations of works by a select number of artists. For Europe, Miller made the safe choice of fifteen first-generation Abstract Expressionists and two younger painters, Grace Hartigan and Sam Francis. What had been accomplished by American artists since World War II had never before been seen in Europe in such quantity, and it was this exhibition that made clear to the larger art-viewing public that the center of contemporary art had shifted across the Atlantic.

New World Prepares to Show Its Cultural Achievements to Old World

Paintings chosen by Museum of Modern Art for a year's European tour are discussed here as works are crated for shipment. From left, Nelson A. Rockefeller, museum trustee; Alfred H. Barr, director of museum collections; Miss Dorothy C. Miller, curator of museum collections, and Porter McCray, head of museum's international program.

Miss Virginia Pearson, museum's Circulation Director, supervises most of craftsmen she are building a frame.

Miss Miller follows the packing of one of the pictures in a special crate. She chose the pictures for the tour.

Abstract Art Is Going to Europe To Represent American Culture

By SANKA KNOX

Refrigerators and other fruits of the assembly line are not the only kinds of American products prized overseas. European dealers, collectors, museums and gallery-goers have shown increasing interest in abstract paintings by American artists.

Yesterday, the Museum of Modern Art displayed about eighty pictures in the process of being crated for shipment abroad for a year's tour of museums.

Although the museum has, under a broad international program, shown the diverse work of American artists in many lands since 1952, the collection leaving for Europe this month is the first to embrace "The New American Painting." Its first stop will be Basel, Switzerland.

Seventeen painters, pioneers in controversial "advanced tendencies" are represented, each by four or five works.

The artists are William Baziotes, James Brooks, Sam Francis, Arshile Gorky, Adolph Gottlieb, Philip Guston, Gorch Hartigan, Franz Kline, William de Kooning, Robert Motherwell, Barnett Newman, Jackson Pollock, Mark Rothko, Theodoros Stamos, Clyfford Still, Bradley Walker Tomlin and Jack Tworkov.

The collection of their paintings, on loan from private and public lenders, was made by Dorothy C. Miller, curator of museum collections. The choice of the pictures was her own, but she said that there was no choice in the case of the artists.—"They were specifically requested, named by name."

The high interest shown abroad for paintings of the American avant-garde received its greatest impetus, Miss Miller said, through a show of fifty years of modern art, organized by the museum in 1955, London dealers now come here regularly, she said, to take back some of the New World's newest contributions to culture.

Alfred H. Barr, director of the museum collections, said at the showing yesterday that the movement of American art to Europe was something new—"nothing like this has happened before."

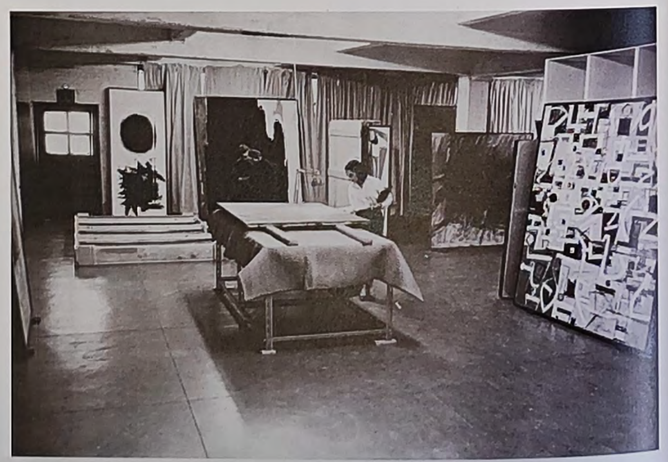
In an introduction to a catalogue of the traveling exhibition, Mr. Barr said that, while the artists in the show were associated with the movement generally called, "Abstract Expressionism," they disliked labels and "shun the words 'movement' and 'school.'"

"None speaks for the others any more than he paints for the others," he wrote. "Their individualism is uncompromising and as a matter of principle they do nothing deliberately in their work to make 'communication' easy."

"Yet in spite of their conscientious intransigence, their followings increase rapidly * * * The movement can be said to have flourished in its maturity since about 1948 * * * and is now dominant throughout the United States."

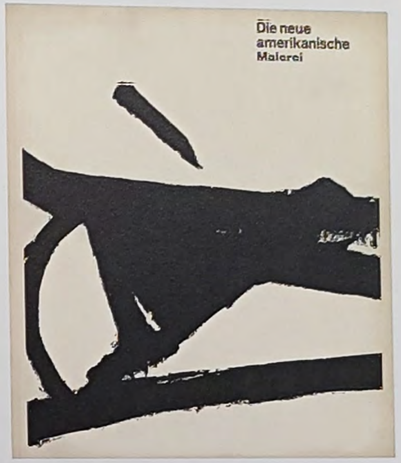
After the Basel showing, the collection will go to Milan, Vienna, Berlin, Stockholm, Brussels, Paris and London.

↑ Sanka Knox, "Abstract Art Is Going to Europe to Represent American Culture," *New York Times*, 11 March 1958. "The New American Painting," organized by the Museum of Modern Art, New York, toured eight countries before returning to the Museum of Modern Art in 1959.



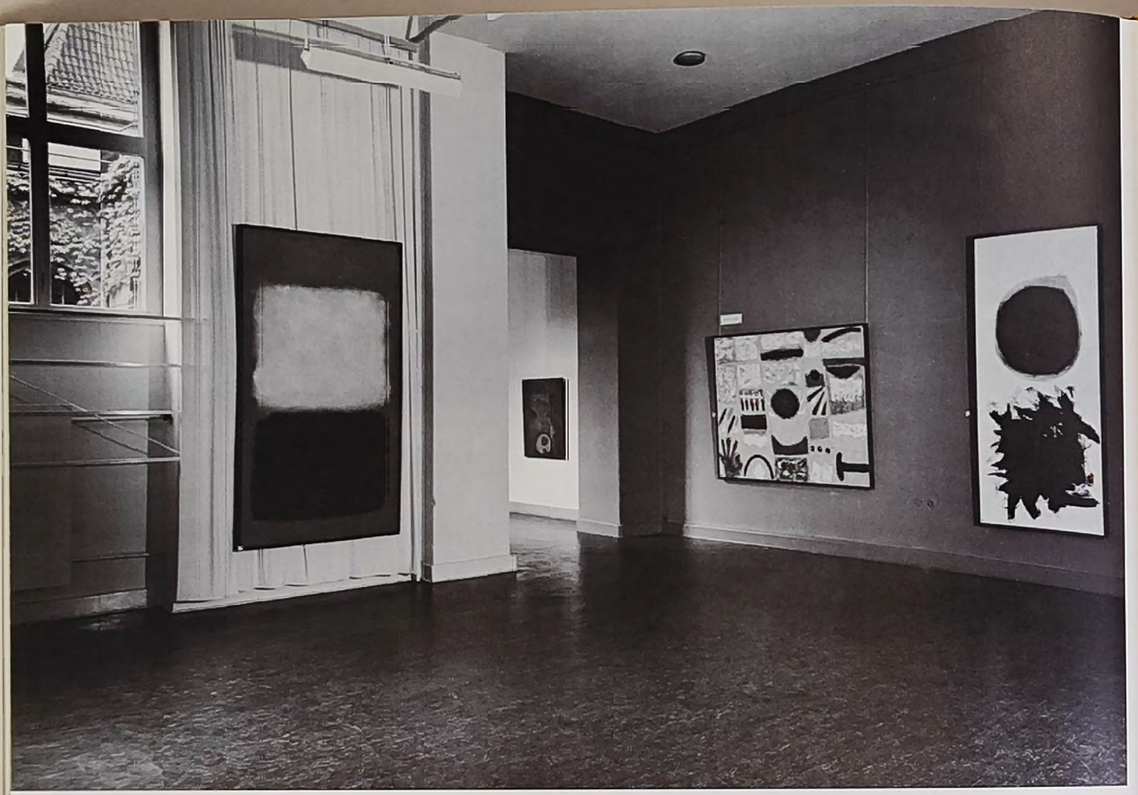
→ Adolph Gottlieb's *Burst* (far left), Clyfford Still's *Painting* (second from left), and Bradley Walker Tomlin's *Number 20* (far right, foreground) awaited shipment to Europe, the Museum of Modern Art, in March 1958.

↑ Kunsthalle, Basel, April–May 1958. Curator Dorothy C. Miller (front row, second from left) at the opening of the first venue of the exhibition. This gallery included works by Barnett Newman (on wall at rear) and Mark Rothko (on wall at right).



↗ Cover of the catalog for both "Die neue amerikanische Malerei" [The New American Painting], Kunsthalle, Basel, and Hochschule für Bildende Kunst, Berlin, the first and fourth venues of the exhibition. Franz Kline's *Accent Grave* is reproduced on the cover.

→ Galleria Civica d'Arte Moderna, Milan, June 1958. This gallery displayed paintings by Sam Francis (left), Tomlin (center, top), Philip Guston (center, bottom), and Rothko (right).

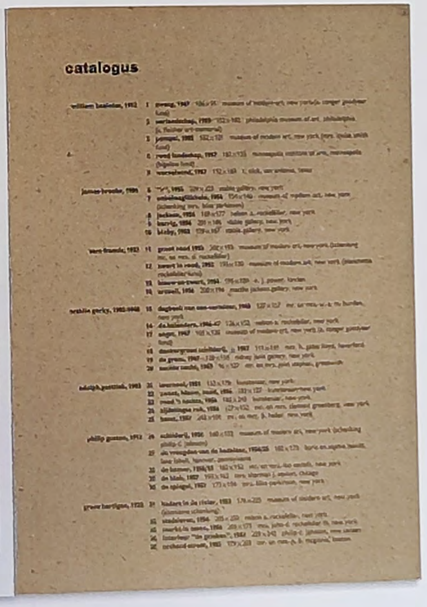


← Hochschule für Bildende Künste, Berlin, September–October 1958. From left: *The Black and the White* by Mark Rothko, *Dwarf* by William Baziotes (in adjacent room), and *Tournament* and *Burst* by Adolph Gottlieb.

↓ Hochschule für Bildende Künste, Berlin. Left to right: Will Grohmann, art critic for *Der Tagesspiegel*; Bernard Gufler, assistant chief of the United States Mission, Berlin; and Porter McCray, director of the International Program of the Museum of Modern Art, at the opening reception.

→ Cover of the catalog for "Jong Amerika schildert" [The New American Painting], Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, October–November 1958. Franz Kline's *Cardinal* is reproduced on the cover.

↓ Spread from the catalog for the Amsterdam venue, showing portraits of the artists on the left page (portrait of Clyfford Still not reproduced). The checklist of works begins on the right page.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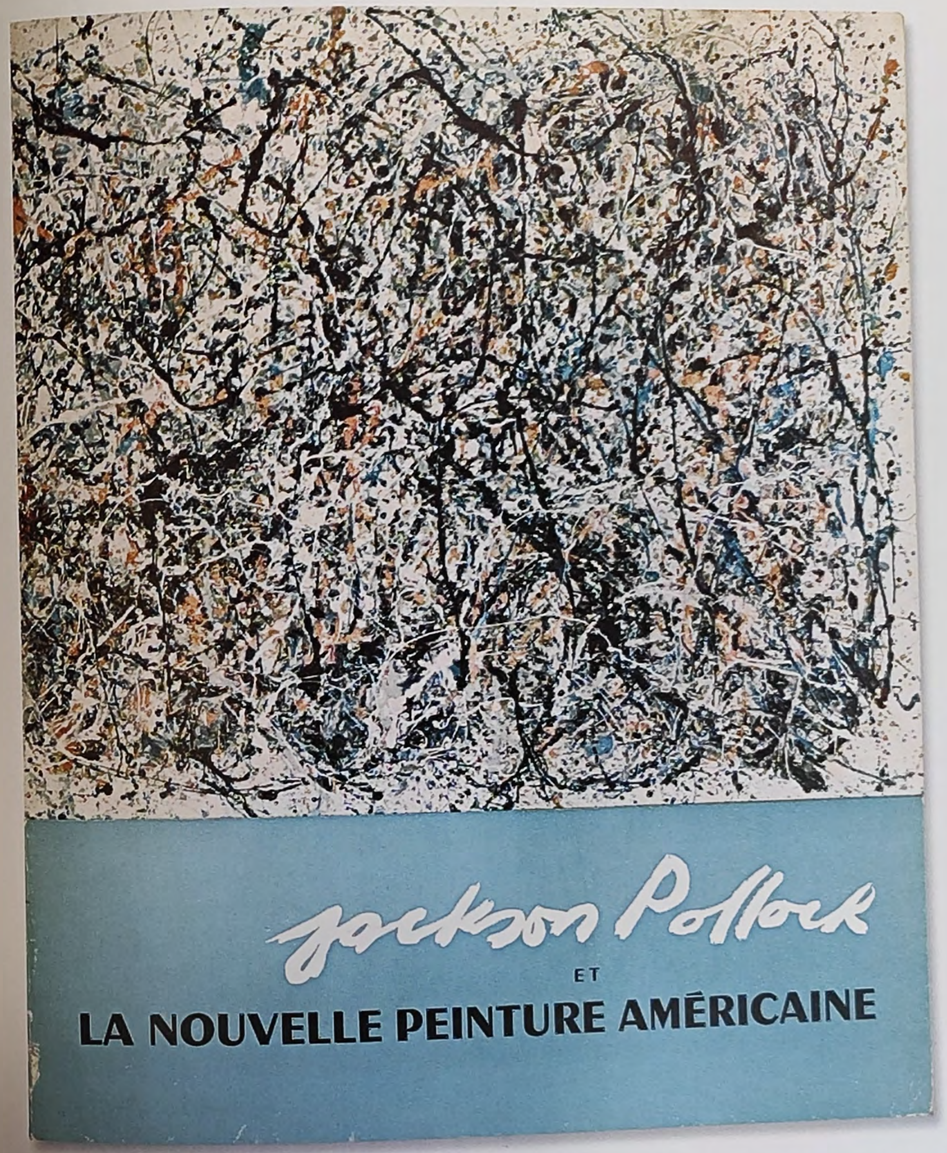
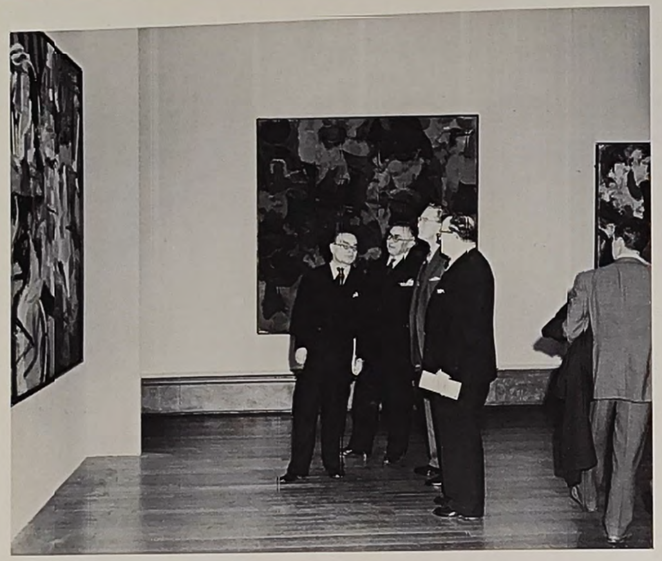
↙ Palais des Beaux-Arts, Brussels, December 1958–January 1959. Left to right: Robert Giron, director general of the Société Auxiliare des Expositions of the Palais des Beaux-Arts; Émile Langui, director general, Ministry of Public Instruction, Administration of Arts and Letters; Gilbert Chase, cultural affairs officer, American Embassy; Philippe Jones, attaché de cabinet of the Ministry of Public Instruction; and Robert Hendricks, vice president of the Palais des Beaux-Arts, at the opening of the exhibition. Grace Hartigan, the only female artist included in the exhibition, was represented by five works, including *City Life* (left).

↓ Musée National d'Art Moderne, Paris, January–February 1959. Robert Motherwell's *Elegy for the Spanish Rebublic XXXV* (far right) and *Personage with Yellow Ochre and White* (fourth from right) were installed on the right-hand wall.

→ Cover of the catalog for "Jackson Pollock et la nouvelle peinture américaine" [Jackson Pollock and The New American Painting], Paris, 1959. An exhibition of work by Jackson Pollock, also organized by the International Council of the Museum of Modern Art, was touring Europe at the same time as "The New American Painting." Occasionally, the two exhibitions were shown concurrently at the same venue.



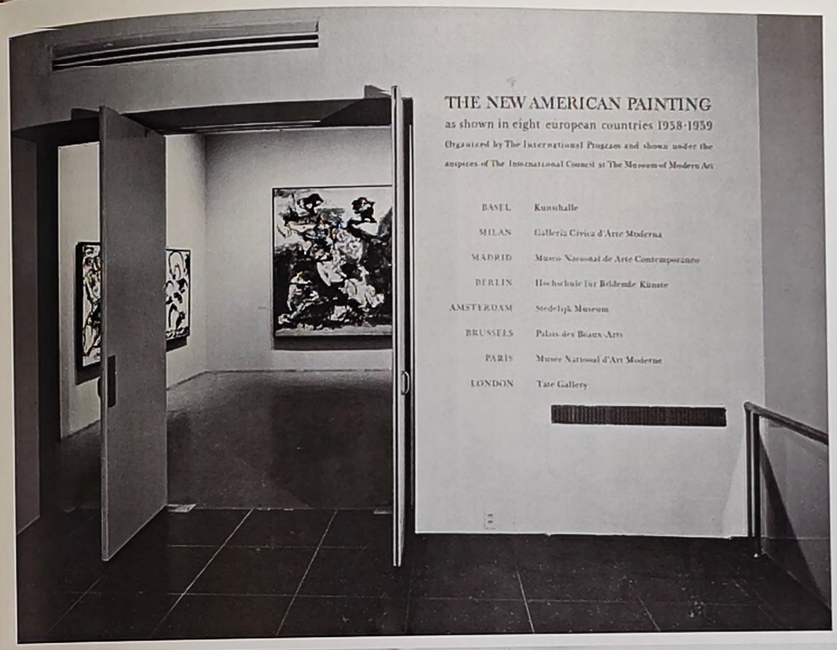


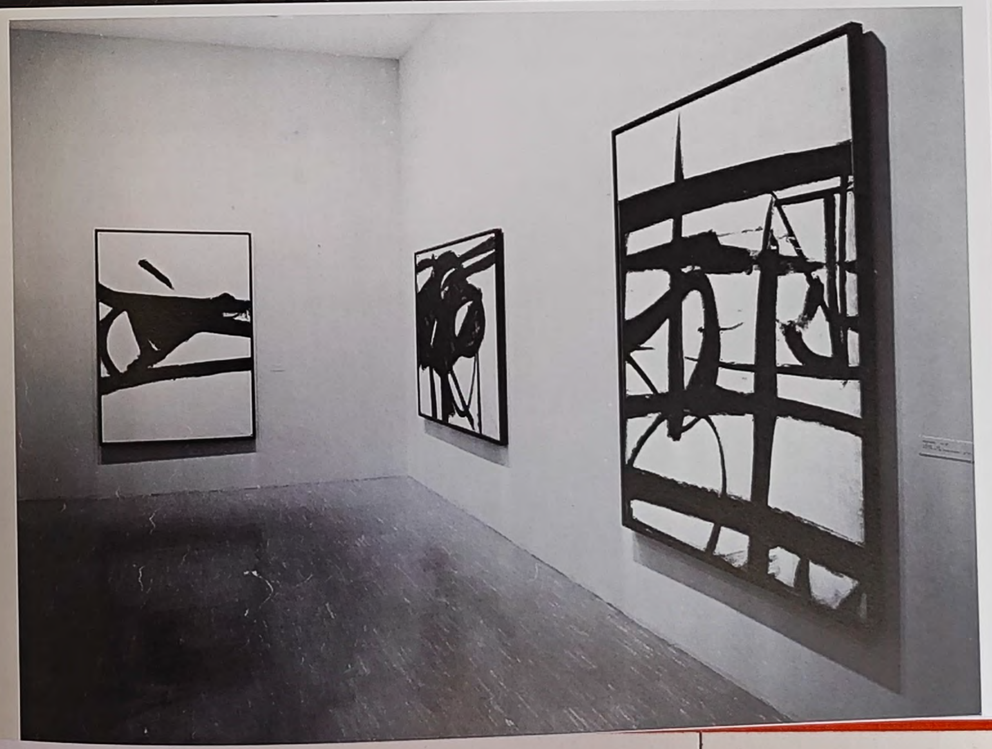
← Tate Gallery, London, February–March 1959. Visitors pause in front of Grace Hartigan's *City Life* (far left).

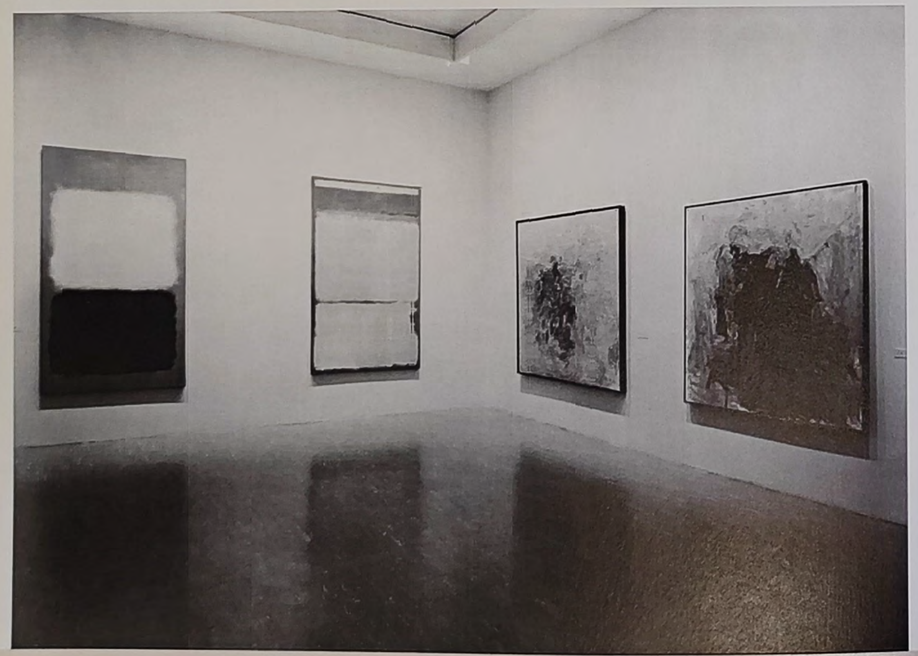
↓ The Museum of Modern Art, New York, May–September 1959. Highlighting the activities of the International Program from 1952 to 1959, this didactic wall display included installation images from a selection of exhibitions and was shown in conjunction with "The New American Painting" in New York.

→ The Museum of Modern Art, New York. The wall text at the entrance to the exhibition listed the eight European venues. The first gallery included paintings by Jackson Pollock.

↘ The Museum of Modern Art, New York. From left: *Accent Grave*, *Chief*, and *Cardinal* by Franz Kline.


THE NEW AMERICAN PAINTING
as shown in eight european countries 1958-1959
Organized by The International Program and shown under the auspices of The International Council at The Museum of Modern Art
BASEL Kunsthalle
MILAN Galleria Civica d'Arte Moderna
MADRID Museo Nacional de Arte Contemporáneo
BERLIN Hochschule für Bildende Künste
AMSTERDAM Stedelijk Museum
BRUSSELS Palais des Beaux-Arts
PARIS Musée National d'Art Moderne
LONDON Tate Gallery

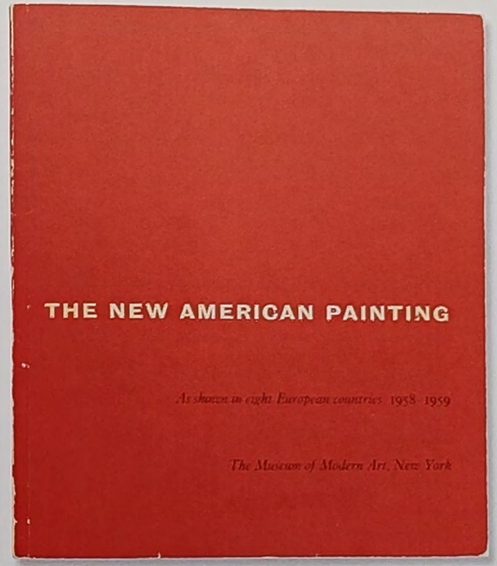


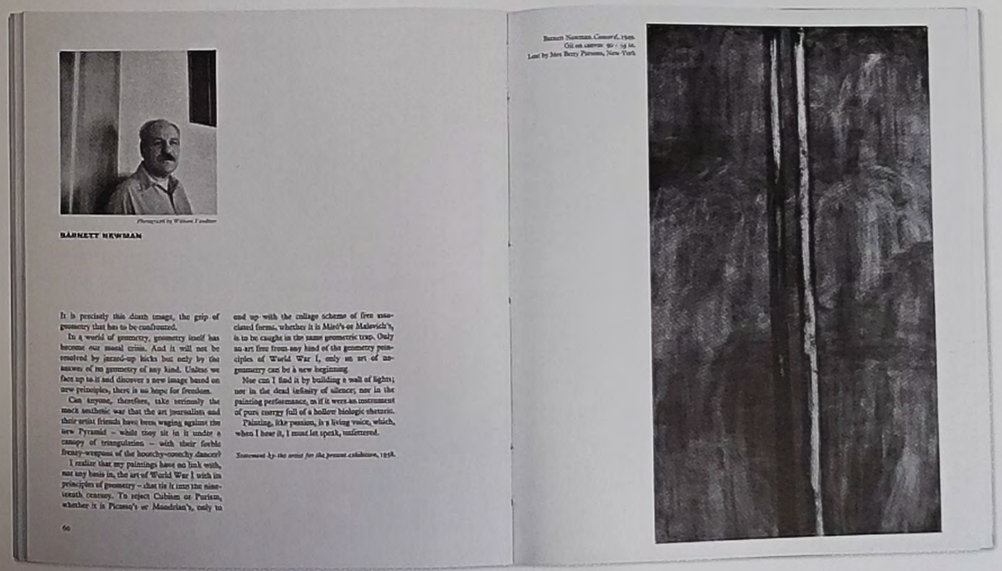


← The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Works by William Baziotes in the exhibition included *Primeval Landscape* (far left), *Dwarf* (second from right), and *Pompeii* (far right).

← The Museum of Modern Art, New York. This gallery included Mark Rothko's *The Black and the White* (far left) and Philip Guston's *Beggar's Joys* (second from right).

→ ↓ Cover and spread from the catalog for "The New American Painting," New York, 1959. The catalog contains an essay by Alfred H. Barr, Jr. (p. 387), biographical entries for each artist, and a checklist of works. The New York catalog (a reprint of the London catalog) presents excerpts from reviews published in the international press.





Photograph by William J. Sullivan

BARNETT NEWMAN

It is precisely this dumb image, the grip of geometry that has to be confronted.

In a world of geometry, geometry itself has become our moral crisis. And it will not be resolved by jazzed-up kicks but only by the answer of no geometry of any kind. Unless we face up to it and discover a new image based on new principles, there is no hope for freedom.

Can anyone, therefore, take seriously the mock aesthetic war that the art journalists and their artist friends have been waging against the new Pyramid – while they sit in it under a canopy of triangularities – with their feeble frenzy-weapons of the slouchy-eyesticky dancer?

I realize that my paintings have no link with, nor any basis in, the art of World War I with its principles of geometry – that tie it into the nineteenth century. To reject Cubism or Purism, whether it is Picasso's or Mondrian's, only to end up with the collage scheme of free unacclaimed forms, whether it is Miró's or Malevich's, is to be caught in the same geometric trap. Only an art free from any kind of the geometry principles of World War I, only an art of no-geometry can be a new beginning.

Nor can I find it by building a wall of lights; nor in the dead inferiority of silence, nor in the painting performance, as if it were an instrument of pure energy full of a hollow biologic rhetoric.

Painting, like passion, is a living voice, which, when I how it, I must let speak, unfettered.

Statement by the artist for the present exhibition, 1958.

66

Barnett Newman. *Cathedra*, 1949. Oil on canvas: 92 × 54 in. Lent by Mrs Betty Parsons, New York

› "Paintings, Too Big to Go Up the Stairs, Find Entry Through a Tenth-Story Window," *New York Times*, 10 April 1959. The article chronicles the return of three Jackson Pollock paintings from "The New American Paiting" exhibition.

FRIDAY, APRIL 10, 1959. **The New York Times.** FRIDAY, APRIL 10, 1959. 31 L.

OUTER-SPACE RAY BOMBARDS EARTH

10 Billion Billion Electron Volt Particle of Hydrogen Detected by Physicists

ITS ORIGIN IS A PUZZLE

M. I. T. Scientist Believes It Must Have Come From Beyond Milky Way

By ROBERT A. PLUNK

Studies of the most energetic atomic event ever observed by man suggests that the earth has been bombarded by the emitter of a hydrogen atom speeding in from outside its galaxy, the Milky Way.

If so, the event in the first observed arrival of matter from another galaxy.

A single cosmic ray particle with an energy of ten billion billion electron volts was recently observed by a team of Massachusetts Institute of Technology physicists at the Agassiz astronomical Station of Harvard University.

A new acceleration of this cosmic event—the most powerful cosmic ray arrival ever detected—occurs—was announced here yesterday at the New York University Physics Department, as the University Regents campus in the Bronx. It was offered by Dr. Bruno Rossi, Professor of Physics at M. I. T.

Dr. Rossi said that the ten billion billion electron-volt event has possibility caused by a speeding hydrogen atom atoms of electrons, and set by the nucleus of a heavier atom. If not, it continued, our galaxy is probably just large enough to have received such an energetic particle, and it must have come from outside the Milky Way.

Cosmic Rays Defined

Most cosmic rays have energy of one field that atoms are spewed by exploding stars and accelerated by magnetic fields in space. These accelerated atoms—the cosmic rays—then plunge into the earth's atmosphere at a speed of nearly 186,000 miles a second. It is continued, our galaxy is probably just large enough to have received such an energetic particle, and it must have come from outside the Milky Way.

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Cosmic rays were discovered in 1912 by Victor F. Hess, who received the Nobel Prize in Physics in 1936. The fragments many have been detected by Cambridge physicists in 1932 by Dr. C. D. Anderson of the California Institute of Technology.

Dr. Rossi explained that the energy of the cosmic ray particle was detected by measuring the ionization it produced in the atmosphere. The ionization is the breaking up of atoms into electrically charged particles.

N. Y. Fund Names Dr. Heald

The appointment of Dr. Henry T. Heald as chairman of the public service division of the Greater New York Fund's 1959 appeal was announced yesterday by Albert A. Greenberg, president of the fund. Dr. Heald is president of the Ford Foundation. The fund's goal is $26,000,000.

Mr. Heller, who is president of the Children's Aid Society and trustee of several settlement houses, is chairman of the fund-raising campaign of Jewish Welfare Board, which includes 150 Jewish community centers and camps.

Paintings, Too Big to Go Up the Stairs, Find Entry Through a Tenth-Story Window

Rolled-up painting by Jackson Pollock entitled "One" is hauled through the window of an apartment at 131 Central Park West. The owners are Mr. and Mrs. Ben Heller.

The New York Times (by Edward Hausner)

Mr. Heller helps moving men to remove the cover from "One," which measures nine by eighteen feet. In background is Pollock's "Echo," which is seven feet square. Non-objective works were being returned after having been loaned for exhibition tour abroad.

It Takes Ten Men and a Hoist To Move 3 Paintings 10 Floors

Three Jackson Pollock paintings, back from a 20,000-mile exhibitions tour abroad, took the last lap of their journey yesterday up the side of an apartment building. Hauled in three giant cranes to the tenth floor by block and tackle, they just managed to escape through a window opening.

By nightfall they were back in the possession of Mr. and Mrs. Ben Heller at 131 Central Park West, where the living rooms had undergone major renovations to accommodate the portable canvases.

The largest of the three, titled "One," is 18 feet long and 9 feet high. It will occupy an entire wall in the room.

The big to get through the window opening when stretched, Pollock, "One" had been rolled by Ron Chilton, owner of a wooden cylinder, protected by heavy paper. The cylinder was then hauled by a block and tackle to the tenth floor.

The paintings will be shown in the Museum of Modern Art's exhibition of "The New American Painting" and "The New Japanese Painting" opening Wednesday.

MIYAN OBJECT FOUND

2-Foot Piece of Monument Discovered in Guatemala

Special to The New York Times.

PHILADELPHIA, April 9 A three-foot fragment of a stone monument built by the ancient Maya, Indians has been discovered by a University of Pennsylvania archaeological expedition in Guatemala.

Hieroglyphic inscriptions on the fragment, weather beaten after nearly 1,000 years in the dense jungle, establish the date of the monument as A.D. 731, the expedition reported last week.

Dr. Edward M. Shook, expedition field director, said he was disappointed at the fragment's size because it was not large enough to have yielded more information. But he added that the discovery was important because it was the first Maya monument found in Guatemala.

The fragment, nearly half a ton in weight, was found by Dr. Shook and Tatiana Proskouriakoff of Cambridge, Mass., in the ruins of Piedras Negras on the Usumacinta River, which forms the boundary between Guatemala and Mexico.

The fragment bears a carved figure of a ruler, probably Ruler 3, who reigned from A.D. 726 to 757, and a long inscription of dates in glyphic form. The inscription is the first to be found on a monument of the Maya civilization.

All three are 'non-objective' works in typical Pollock fashion, of paint dripped on canvas. In the backs are answer marks to show the way they will be hung.

The weight of the coated portions, as well as their size, presented a problem for the porters. It took ten men to maneuver each through the window opening and onto position on the floor.

Mr. Heller, who is president of the Children's Aid Society and trustee of several settlement houses, is chairman of the fund-raising campaign of Jewish Welfare Board, which includes 150 Jewish community centers and camps.

U.S. Fears Student Loan May Cost Girls Interest

WASHINGTON, April 9 (UPI)—Lawrence G. Derthick, United States Education Commissioner, says no one knows how many co-eds would sign up for new Federal college student loans. There's a good reason:

No one knows how many girls would decide that a debt of $3,000 or $4,000 might discourage a boy from marrying them.

Mr. Derthick explained to a House Appropriations Committee that co-eds have been "notoriously reluctant" in the past to go into debt because they feel it might be an impediment to marriage.

RABBI AND PRIEST END PRAYER ISSUE

Agree on Fourth Stanza of 'America' as a Substitute in L. I. School District

By ROY R. SILVER

Special to The New York Times.

LAWRENCE, L. I., April 9—A controversy over the saying of the Lord's Prayer in some of the schools of this district, apparently ended today. The School Board dismissed the prayer in favor of the fourth stanza of "America."

Protests against using the prayer had been made by the South Shore Jewish Community Council, which represents twenty-three congregations and civic groups.

The council had charged school officials with "continuing violations" of the principle of the separation of church and state and "disregard for the religious sensibilities of a large portion of the community" in permitting the daily reciting of the prayer.

While the School Board was in special session Rabbi Abram Vossen Goodman, president of the council, and the Rev. William Galloway, pastor of Our Lady of Good Counsel Roman Catholic Church, Inwood, met to discuss the problem.

In a joint statement the clergymen said they were opposed to sectarian prayers in the public schools, but did not oppose the stanza from "America" or a prayer recommended by the Board of Regents.

The religious council of the Five Towns and the Rockaways, which includes members of the major faiths, today reaffirmed their opposition to sectarian prayers and their acceptance of the two alternatives.

The action, scheduled by the council for next Wednesday was canceled tonight. Rabbi Goodman explained the appreciation of the attitude of "members of all faiths."

The saying of the prayer recommended by the Board of Regents is in litigation in the State Supreme Court in Mineola. The suit was brought by the New York Civil Liberties Union on behalf of five residents of the Herricks School District.

The fourth stanza of "America" is:

Our Father's God to Thee,
Author of Liberty,
To Thee we sing.
Long may our land be bright
With freedom's holy light,
Protect us by Thy might,
Great God our king.

JERSEY TURNPIKE TO BE EXTENDED

Link With Bergen-Passaic Expressway Will Result From 2-Mile Addition

WORK TO COST $ MILLION

New Section Likely to Be Freeway—Pushing Road to Border Weighed

By GEORGE CABLE WRIGHT

Special to The New York Times.

TRENTON, April 9—New Jersey has decided to extend the State Turnpike north to the Bergen-Passaic Expressway, now under construction.

The two-mile length between the super highways is expected to be a freeway. It would be constructed at a cost of about $6,000,000. Plans have been made available by the Port of New York Authority.

Gov. Robert B. Meyner and administration officials are also considering the completion of the Turnpike to the New York State line so that it could be linked to the New York Throughway.

Plans for the Turnpike-Expressway connection have been drawn and the general route of the spur decided.

It would start at a point along the turnpike a few hundred feet south of the present terminus and run in a slightly northwesterly direction, but east of Teaneck Road, through the Overpeck Creek Meadows. The actual merger of the two arteries would be northeast of Arthur Street in Teaneck.

The state has riparian rights along most of the proposed right of way. All that is holding up the extension is the question of whether it should be a freeway built by the State Highway Department or be part of the toll road and be constructed by the Turnpike Authority.

Mr. Meyner and other top state officials made it clear today that in all probability the link would be a freeway.

The state had been considering the proposed super highway for some time. But its decision to go ahead was based primarily on the mounting traffic congestion along U. S. Route

The New York Times

LINK: How turnpike would tie in with Bergen-Passaic Expressway (heavy lines).

Area in use

The New American Painting [exh. cat.]

Introduction

ALFRED H. BARR, JR.

New York, 1959

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'We are now committed to an unqualified act, not illustrating outworn myths or contemporary alibis. One must accept total responsibility for what he executes.'
Clyfford Still 1952

'Voyaging into the night, one knows not where, on an unknown vessel, an absolute struggle with the elements of the real.'
Robert Motherwell

'There is no more forthright a declaration, and no shorter a path to man's richness, nakedness and poverty than the painting he does. Nothing can be hidden on its surface—the least private as well as the most personal of worlds.'
James Brooks 1956

'Art never seems to make me peaceful or pure . . . I do not think . . . of art as a situation of comfort.'
Willem de Kooning 1951

'The need is for felt experience—intense, immoderate, direct, subtle, unified, warm, vivid, rhythmic.'
Robert Motherwell 1951

'Subject is crucial and only that subject matter is crucial which is tragic and timeless.'
Mark Rothko

'What happens on the canvas is unpredictable and surprising to me . . . As I work, or when the painting is finished, the subject reveals itself.'
William Baziotes 1952

'Usually I am on a work for a long stretch, until a moment arrives when the air of the arbitrary vanishes and the paint falls into positions that feel destined . . . To paint is a possessing rather than a picturing.'
Philip Guston 1956

'The function of the artist is to make actual the spiritual so that it is there to be possessed.'
Robert Motherwell

Of the seventeen painters in this exhibition, none speaks for the others any more than he paints for the others. In principle their individualism is as uncompromising as that of the religion of Kierkegaard whom they honour. For them, John Donne to the contrary, each man is an island.

Though a painter's words about his art are not always to be taken at face value, the quotations preceding this preface—like the statements printed further on—suggest that these artists share certain strong convictions. Many feel that their painting is a stubborn, difficult, even desperate effort to discover the 'self' or 'reality', an effort to which the whole personality should be recklessly committed: *I paint, therefore I am*. Confronting a blank canvas they attempt 'to grasp authentic being by action, decision, a leap of faith', to use Karl Jaspers' Existentialist phrase.

Indeed one often hears Existentialist echoes in their words, but their 'anxiety,' their 'commitment,' their 'dreadful freedom' concern their work primarily. They defiantly reject the conventional values of the society which surrounds them, but they are not politically *engagés* even though their paintings have been praised and condemned as symbolic demonstrations of freedom in a world in which freedom connotes a political attitude.

In recent years, some of the painters have been impressed by the Japanese Zen philosophy with its transcendental humour and its exploration of the self through intuition. Yet, though Existentialism and Zen have afforded some encouragement and sanction to the artists, their art itself has been affected only sporadically by these philosophies (by contrast with that of the older painter, Mark Tobey, whose abstract painting has been deeply and directly influenced by Tao and Zen).

Surrealism, both philosophically and technically, had a more direct effect upon the painting of the group. Particularly in the early days of the movement, during the war, several painters were influenced by André Breton's programme of 'pure psychic automatism . . . in the absence of all control exercised by reason and outside of all aesthetic and moral preoccupation'. Automatism was, and still is, widely used as a technique but rarely without some control or subsequent revision. And from the first Breton's dependence upon Freudian and Marxian sanctions seemed less relevant than Jung's concern with myth and archaic symbol.

The artists in the exhibition comprise the central core as well as the major marginal talent in the movement now generally called 'Abstract Expressionism' or, less commonly, 'Action Painting'. Both terms were considered as titles for this exhibition.

Abstract Expressionism, a phrase used ephemerally in Berlin in 1919, was re-invented (by the writer) about 1929 to designate Kandinsky's early abstractions that in certain ways do anticipate the American movement—to which the term was first applied in 1946. However, man, the painters in this show deny that their work is 'abstract,' at least in any pure, programmatic sense; and they rightly reject any significant association with German Expressionism, a movement recently much exhibited in America.

Action Painting, a phrase proposed in preference to Abstract Expressionism by the poet-critic Harold Rosenberg, in an important article published in 1952 (see below*), now seems to overemphasize the physical act of painting. Anyway, these artists dislike labels and shun the words 'movement' and 'school'.

The briefest glance around the exhibition reveals a striking variety among the paintings. How could canvases differ more in form than do Kline's broad, slashing blacks from Rothko's dissonant mists, or Pollock's Dionysiac *perpetuum mobile* from Newman's single, obsessive, vertical line? What then unites these paintings?

First, their size. Painted at arm's length, with large gestures, they challenge both the painter and the observer. They envelop the eye, they seem immanent. They are often as big as mural paintings, but their scale as well as their lack of illusionistic depth are only coincidentally related to architectural decoration. Their flatness is, rather, a consequence of the artist's concern with the actual painting process as his prime instrument of expression, a concern which also tends to eliminate imitative suggestion of the forms, textures, colours and spaces of the real world, since these might compete with the primary reality of paint on canvas.

As a consequence, rather than by intent, most of the paintings seem abstract. Yet they are never formalistic or non-objective in spirit. Nor is there (in theory) any preoccupation with the traditional aesthetics of 'plastic values', composition, quality of line, beauty of surface, harmony of colour. When these occur in the paintings—and they often do—it is the result of a struggle for order almost as intuitive as the initial chaos with which the paintings begin.

Despite the high degrees of abstraction, the

painters insist that they are deeply involved with subject matter or content. The content, however, is never explicit or obvious even when recognizable forms emerge, as in certain paintings by de Kooning, Baziotes, and Gottlieb. Rarely do any conscious associations explain the emotions of fear, gaiety, anger, violence, or tranquillity which these paintings transmit or suggest.

In short these painters, as a matter of principle, do nothing deliberately in their work to make 'communication' easy. Yet in spite of their intransigence, their following increases, largely because the paintings themselves have a sensuous, emotional, aesthetic and at times almost mystical power which works and can be overwhelming.

The movement began some fifteen years ago in wartime New York. American painting in the early 1940's was bewilderingly varied and without dominant direction. The 'old masters' such as John Marin, Edward Hopper, Max Weber, Stuart Davis, were more than holding their own. The bumptious Mid-Western regionalism of the 1930's, though still noisy, was dying along with its political analogue, 'America First' isolationism. Most of the artists who during the decade of the Great Depression had been naively attracted by Communism had grown disillusioned both with the machinations of the party and with Socialist Realism. There were romantic realists who looked back nostalgically to the early nineteenth century, and "magic reallists', and painters of the social scene such as the admirable Ben Shahn. The young Boston expressionists Hyman Bloom and Jack Levine had considerable success in New York, while from the Pacific coast came the visionary art of Mark Tobey and Morris Graves, reflecting Oriental influence in spirit and technique. There was also a lively interest in modern primitives, but no one discovered an American *douanier* Rousseau.

Late in the artistically reactionary 1930's, the American Abstract Artists group had stood firm along with their allies, *Abstraction–Création* in Paris and Unit One in England. Working principally in rather dry cubist or non-objective styles, they did not seem much affected by the arrival in the United States of Léger, Mondrian and several Bauhaus masters. Quite other young painters, not yet identified as a group, were however strongly influenced by the Surrealist refugees from the war, notably Max Ernst, André Masson, Marcel Duchamp (who had been the leader of New York Dadaism during World War I), the poet André Breton, and the young Chilean-Parisian painter Matta Echaurren. Equally important was the influence of the former Surrealist associates Picasso, Miró and Arp, who had stayed in Europe.

Chief among the supporters of the Surrealist group in New York was Peggy Guggenheim whose gallery, 'Art of This Century', opened in the autumn of 1942 and served as the principal centre of the *avant-garde* in American painting until the founder returned to Europe in 1947. Her brilliant pioneering was then carried on by the new galleries of Betty Parsons, Charles Egan and Sam Kootz. 'Art of This Century' gave one-man shows to Motherwell, Baziotes, Rothko and Still, and no less than four to Jackson Pollock. Arshile Gorky, the most important early master of the movement, showed at another (and prior) Surrealist centre, the Julien Levy Gallery, with the poetic blessing of Breton.

The work of certain older American painters, notably Ryder, Marin and Dove, interested some of the artists, and for a time Rothko, Pollock, Gottlieb and Still were influenced by the symbolic imagery of primitive art, especially of the American northwest coast. All during this early period and afterwards, Hans Hofmann, a Parisian-trained German of Picasso's generation, taught the young inspiringly and became their *doyen* colleague, though with little obvious effect on the leaders.

Before 1950 most of the artists in this show had hit their stride. And they had won general, though usually reluctant, recognition as the flourishing vanguard of American painting, thanks to the courageous dealers just mentioned, enthusiastic critics such as Clement Greenberg, a handful of editors, teachers, collectors, and museum officials, and above all to their own extraordinary energy, talent, and fortitude.

They were not, however, a compact phalanx. Gorky had been a quite well-known but rather derivative painter for fifteen years before he found himself about 1943. Pollock and Baziotes, both born in 1912, worked in obscurity until 1942–3, when they emerged along with the youthful and articulate Motherwel. Pollock exhibited his first highly abstract pictures about 1945 and invented his 'drip' technique in 1947. (Exhibitions early in 1959 confirmed that Pollock had painted abstract expressionist paintings as early as 1937) and that Hofmann was using a drip technique as early as 1940.) By 1947, Rothko and Still, working some of the time in California, were developing their characteristic styles, Gottlieb was turning away from his 'pictographic' forms, and Stamos, twenty years younger than they, had had his first show. In 1948, de Kooning, then forty-four, publicly entered the movement and quickly became a major figure; Tomlin was nearly fifty. Kline, Newman, Brooks and Guston, all mature painters, also transformed their art, Guston after having relinquished a brilliant success in a more realistic style. Since 1950, hundreds upon hundreds of American artists have turned to 'abstract expressionism', some of them, like Tworkov, in mid-career, others like Hartigan and Francis while they were still students. Sam Francis is unique as the only expatriate in the show and the only painter whose reputation was made without benefit of New York, having moved directly to Paris from San Francisco where Still and Rothko had been honoured and influential teachers. Sculptors related to, and sometimes closely allied with, the painters' movement should be mentioned, notably Herbert Ferber, David Hare, Ibram Lassaw, Seymour Lipton, Theodore Roszak and David Smith.

The movement, after several tentative early years, has flourished in its maturity since about 1948, roughly the starting point of this show. Naturally, because of its dominance, it has aroused much resistance in the United States among other artists and the public, but it has excited widespread interest and even influenced the painting of some of its most stubborn adversaries. Others are staunchly resisting what has inevitably become fashionable. There will be reactions and counter-revolutions—and some are already evident. Fortunately, the undogmatic variety and flexibility inherent in the movement permits divergence even among the leaders; a few years ago, for instance, both Pollock and de Kooning painted a number of pictures with recognizable figures, to the dismay of some of their followers who had been inclined to make an orthodoxy of abstraction.

For over a dozen years now, works by some of these artists have been shown abroad, first in Europe, then in Latin America and the Orient. They have met with controversy but also with enthusiasm, thanks in part to artists working along similar lines, and to other champions.

To have written a few words of introduction to this exhibition is an honour for an American who has watched with deep excitement and pride the development of the artists represented, their long struggle—with themselves even more than with the public—and their present triumph.

* Harold Rosenberg, "American Action Painters," *ARTnews*, Vol. 51, December 1952.

"Candore e Conformismo della 'Nuova Pittura Americana'"

LEONARDO BORGESE

Corriere della Sera — Milan, 8 June 1958

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In Ignazio Gardella's "pavilion," our Galleria d'Arte Moderna is displaying some eighty pictures by seventeen artists under an enthusiastic and optimistic title: "The New American Painting." Who can tell? But we believe that half a century from now the true panorama of American painting in the 1950s will not include these paintings or these painters. The real story will be different.

No doubt there is something else concealed behind the enthusiastic, euphoric, optimistic, official, and overbearing titles. We feel certain that America must be much more than the pieces the offices and galleries of modern art are displaying today.

"New American Painting." It isn't new and it isn't American. Popular slogans of this kind sufficiently explain these eighty outsize canvases—they stand out like billboards—specially improvised to be purchased by museums of modern art and taken here and there for official exhibitions and cultural exchanges. There's no deep necessity behind these works, no inner torment, not even a serious study of form. Not a single painter that swims against the stream. No mavericks. No spiritual energy.

The things we want to say are not simple, and we detest gibes. We love the Americans. We know and admire the Founding Fathers who sailed on the *Mayflower*, and American men of the type described by Henry James in *The American* or perhaps Rudyard Kipling in *The Naulahka*. We love and envy their honesty, their morality, their religious sense. However, it so happens that honesty, morality, and religious sense generate innocence, and that innocence becomes a kind of pernicious, ruinous childishness. The result is that many, far too many, Americans fail to see clearly and become complacent about their innocence to the point where they tranquilly allow themselves to be duped, cheated, and conned. Childhood is a delightful state, childishness a pernicious weakness.

Then there is the fact that the Americans have a blind, materialistic faith in technology. And this makes them more childish than ever, like children playing with toys they think are perfect. Hence many Americans suppose art is within the reach of anyone who wants to take it up: easy, undemanding, prepackaged, hygienic.

Take Piet Mondrian, a Dutch artist who died in New York in 1944, after reducing painting to nothing between straight lines, or Jackson Pollock, who reduced painting to a finely chopped nothing. Here we have two easygoing technicians or mechanics of art. The painters presented in Milan all rehash similar techniques from the old European literary cafés. There is no real novelty, though critics and art historians have tried to pump in content, significance, and philosophy. In these huge pictures, you find here and there a dash of indolent, effortless Expressionism, sterilized, vacuous Surrealism, or futile, juvenile Picassoism. As for the rest, ninety percent of them have nothing but squares and rectangles of flat color, or smudges, stains, dribbles, spatters, blots, blobs, splashes, swirls, scrapes, scratches, smears, scribbles, doodles, and kaleidoscope patterns.

And the titles? Ambitious, presumptuous, and all the more so the poorer and more wretched the work gets: *Big Red* [Gran Rosso], *Agony* [Agonia], *Diary of a Seducer* [Diario di un seduttore], *Side Pull* [Corrente Laterale], *Beggar's Joys* [Gioie di un mendicante], *Cardinal* [Cardinale] . . . But even worse are the fulsome, fanatical, mystical words, puerile and senseless, added by critics like Alfred H. Barr, Jr., director of the Museum of Modern Art, New York. We can briefly sum up his "new" aesthetic thinking as the following: never ask the artist what he is trying to say, because you don't ask a bird what its song says or a flower about the meaning of its scent.

Is it really worth paying for the upkeep of all these white-haired and balding artists, when we already have fresh young birds and flowers everywhere? Why force so many good people to mess with colors, lying on the floor like savages or children? Sheer childishness.

As for the public, they sit there quietly on molded plastic chairs, yearning to understand and love flat colors, daubs and dabs. Optimism.

Ruinous optimism. When what we need is pessimism, because optimism is the equivalent of materialism, and materialism is dumbing down the world. What we need are courses of pessimism and Latin in every school. Such a reform would even make technology work better.

We're in a sorry state, with the puerility and optimism of the Americans matched by the infantilism, optimism, superficiality, and technicism of the Russians. The former have Abstract or rather nonfigurative art, since authentic, serious Abstract art is dead. The latter go in for cheap illustrative art, devoid of poetry. Conformity and stale ideas abound both East and West.

These recurrent official American exhibitions always leave us depressed. It's like the end of the civilized world. And yet we love the Americans and we trust them! When will they send us a real American exhibition? (And we also love the Holy Russia of Pushkin, Gogol, Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, Chekhov, and we dream of seeing an authentic show of Russian art.)

At the exhibition on Palestro Street the "new" and "American" artists who are most gifted in coloring or drawing are Arshile Gorky, who was born in Armenia in 1905 and committed suicide in 1948, Grace Hartigan, born in 1922, Willem de Kooning, born in Rotterdam in 1904, and the presumptuous, morbid Jackson Pollock, who was born in 1912 and died in 1956.

"Pintura Abstracta Norteamericana"

[excerpt]

JOSÉ CAMÓN AZNAR

ABC — Madrid, 26 July 1958

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What strange and extraordinary world is presented to us by the Museo de Arte Contemporáneo's great exhibition of "The New American Painting?" It is a pity that this exhibition, which reveals something of the aesthetics of the American people through a huge rent—as much of sensibility as of the eyes—and which would have aroused passionate commentary, should have opened in a period during which it might pass almost unnoticed. We move alongside these large canvases as if before ruined skyscrapers, feeling the Herculean heaviness of an art that requires huge splotches, vast planetary surfaces, and the grand rhythms of racing cars in order to express itself. It is impossible not to take notice of a pictorial mani-

festation like this, because there they are, these canvases—even if only to be condemned—and the gigantism of their measurements already indicates an ambition that may go hand in hand with the American people's apprehensive and domineering concept of life. At the sight of these disjointed colors and these lines that escape all natural delimitations, we may well ask whether we're standing before the awkward early stage of a new dawn of painting, or its dissolution. Are these antifigurative paintings reflective of a phase in which a man wishes to express his longings—his great longings—with forms that do not imitate nature because they surpass the limitations of reason, with their swaths of color that only recall twilights, steppes, and still-boiling galaxies? Or are these paintings, on the contrary, an example of an end-of-the-world exhaustion, one in which natural forms disintegrate, where colors and lines fall out of order into a chaotic and monumental confusion? Let us say that both interpretations are possible. And that these pictures leave the impression of a terrific babbling, a tremendous effort to reveal a subconscious beyond, or closer than, any possible concretion. And likewise, since these images—despite their luminous potency at some times, their nebulous impotence at others, and at still others their merry explosions—have not been formulated in comprehensible volumes, their commentary must be unformed and allusive, without definite references to either technique or image. . . . And throughout this collection, there is that impression of being surrounded by masses in an incandescent genesis, or in grand decay. It is true that these abstractions are not substantially distinguishable from those of European art, and we might even say that these are of a more lacerating humanism. In those exhibited here, a decisive influence from our own Miró is noticeable. In the less banal—some are of a naïve simplicity—we may divine a struggle to attain an expression that exists only in a larval state, that fails to find a channel—dreams that are unable to take hold of images in order to be set free. It is significant that two of the painters whose work is exhibited here have committed suicide. That power out of all proportion, at times innocent and at others decadent, which is how North America appears to us in many respects, may be revealed here and there in these pictures, in which we cannot tell whether there is deep desperation or panicky joy in the face of the future.

Is this art? In times to come, will these pictures hang alongside those that now cover the walls of museums? Or will they rather be considered an expression of an age feeling its way blindly through the reality around it, as well as toward its own destiny? Will they one day be assigned to that area of philosophy that considers nothingness the unavoidable end of man?

"Die Neue Amerikanische Malerei: Zu einer Ausstellung in der Hochschule für Bildende Künste" [excerpt]

WILL GROHMANN

Der Tagesspiegel — Berlin, 7 September 1958

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. . . The seventeen American painters at the "Steinplatz," though not drawing the entire present artistic output of the United States, do present a representative section thereof. In view of the large number of great talents, one can speak of an American School for the first time in the history of art, personalities are emerging that are not influenced by Europe, but on the contrary, influence Europe, including Paris, through the convincingness of their conceptions. For nearly ten years Pollock has exerted his influence on the avant-garde of all countries. . . .

There is, for example, Willem de Kooning, who suggests in his *February* [Februar] part of a season, in composition and in memory. There are dimensions of memory, but fused to painterly invention, or perhaps it is the opposite. For the spectator that is not essential, he is not concerned with the process but with the result. De Kooning also has influence; Grace Hartigan, the only woman painter of the group, belongs to his way of expression. And Theodoros Stamos with his *High Snow* [Hohen Schnee] and Jack Tworkov with his *Prophets* [Propheten]? They may have the same conception of what art can be today: they are painters without regard for the ready-made world. What they paint is real; it is the spectator himself who must have a certain amount of imagination in order to comprehend. Without an actual consciousness of the universe this is not possible. Here, there is no comfort, but a struggle with the elements, with society, with fate. It is like the American novel; something happens, and what happens is disquieting and at the same time pregnant with the future. Here we do not have a question of aesthetics, not today, but possibly in another twenty years, when we have gotten used to the idea that painting is also this. . . .

Robert Motherwell and Franz Kline stand apart from the rest. . . . What makes these painters artists is the advance into a world that is not prefabricated, but for that reason is also not boarded up; on the contrary, it is so vast that one hardly dares to enter it. What is emphasized here? An event that starts like a poem by Ezra Pound and ends with a statute for the investigation of the space of the universe. Greece is not a European suburb any more.

These are examples of the whole, not a sum total. Nevertheless there does exist enough common ground. They all use vast dimensions, not from megalomania, but because one cannot say these things in miniature. Klee was able to do just that; his world was no smaller because of it; he was a monk and wrote the psalter of our saeculum. Americans are world travelers and conquerors. They possess an enormous daring. Motherwell calls it the ethical basis of artistic creation and the impetus that drives the language of gesture into the unlimited. One proves himself in the doing, in the performance, in the act of creation. In the United States one speaks of Action Painting. We speak of Abstract Expressionism. This difference characterizes America as well as Europe. We cannot forget, we distill the conceptions of long experience instead of creating new ones. In any case, these young Americans stand beyond heritage and psychology, nearly beyond good and bad. In Europe we are a little bit afraid before such a lack of prejudice. Could it be that we are already in a state of defense?

"Au Musée d'Art Moderne: Pollock et Ses Frères" [excerpt]

ANDRÉ CHASTEL

Le Monde — Paris, 17 January 1959

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This is not the first time that contemporary painting from the United States has been shown in Paris. Several years ago the Galerie de France, and in 1953 the Musée d'Art Moderne, introduced the great figures of the New York School. Their success has been doubtful and still, by a hundred ties and complicities since the war, the avant-gardes of the world's capitals have developed—or contracted—with an almost identical rhythm. But on this occasion the circumstances seem good. It is not only a question of bringing to the public's attention a few American names to slip in next to the "Parisians," but—more profoundly—of coming to an interesting and opportune awareness of the "modern adventure" in painting, thanks to the remarkable forms it is taking on the other side of the Atlantic. Such an awareness will be assisted by these canvases, borrowed from America's museums and collections and chosen by New York's Museum of Modern Art, which are now completing a European tour begun almost a year ago.

The exhibition has the good luck to possess a star, and a certain unity as well. In fact, there are really two shows here: in the main hall, the work of Jackson Pollock (born in 1912, died in 1956, represented by sixty paintings and drawings), who is something like the "hero" of "progressive" art in America; and in the galleries of the floor beneath, eighty canvases by seventeen New York painters, all of whom have an impressive series of regional and international exhibitions behind them.

Rather than present an eclectic panorama, those painters have been selected who, willy-nilly, have joined together in displaying the impatient, explosive inspiration of what has been called "action painting." This is a painting of behavior in which the painter commits himself as one might dive into a waterfall, often with unusual procedures of brushwork and application—sprinkling, spattering, dripping, etc.; the result is a trickling, streaming, unpredictable picture that can vary from nothingness to an expressive whole. The problem is to orient these exercises suitably in order to multiply the happiest results. Such is the painter's career, which fascinates the young generation; with a colossal proportion of waste, these games of the unconscious, of raw passion and of chance, have allowed some notable successes, for in them we find elemental feeling and movement, the ardor and the naïveté of the New World. The very idea of art is here avoided; the painter hurls himself into experiments where he must discover, in fear and trembling, the meaning of the very values he denies. . . .

All of which emphasizes to an extreme degree the originality of the American scene—or more exactly, of the New York milieu. And yet this show enforces certain analogies. The roots of this art are European, and are called fauvism, German expressionism, Klee, Picasso, sometimes Matisse or André Masson's inspired Surrealism. (We must not forget that the painters exiled by the war created for a time in New York a milieu as "international" as that of Paris.) This exhibition's great merit is to give, with Pollock, the entire measure of this double relationship of assimilation and rejection that characterizes American painting. Until his tragic death in 1956, Pollock continued to be the strongest temperament of the New World. He was attracted by the grandiloquent art of the Mexicans, but the—well-absorbed—influences of Picasso separated him from it: pictures like *Male and Female* [Mâle et femelle], based on certain "ateliers" of 1925, or *The She-Wolf* [La louve] (1943) reveal this quite clearly by the heightened color and the shrouded forms. Startlingly enough, there is a kind of grace, an elegance in the tonality, obvious in a canvas like *Totem II* (1945), but above all it is evident that the action of André Masson has released an artist who has at once been able, by "graphism" and by movement, to utilize his models' freedom of expression. Admirers who will wisely visit the handsome group of drawings will be able to discover this for themselves: here are great heads with clotted eyes, here are tendrils and curlicues, here are even the stipplings of a feverish Nabi. Pollock, obsessed by automatism, the force of shock, assimilated all these examples; we can follow clearly—with flagrant inequalities—the recourse to hallucinatory forms, the assaulting waves of faces of 1952, everything that refers to the flux of life, the imperious, fascinating, despairing feeling for swift rhythms. This powerful intuition that is displayed in the insistent and violent harmonies of jazz has been seized upon by Pollock, who has hurled everything into it. He works on oilcloth, invents "drip painting" or *arrosage*, with colors that, in his *Cathedrals* [Cathédrales] (1947) and the enormous *Blue Poles* [Poteaux bleus] (1953), are spattered with aluminum paint, black, and red lead. Sometimes the accumulated layers of paint even cover up whatever happens to be left on the canvas that has been stretched on the floor and worked over with nervous intensity: cigarette butts, pieces of glass, etc. But we are as far from Dubuffet and his "haute pâte" as we are from Nicolas de Staël. The big panels of 1951 and 1953 shown here give the most convincing notion of this energetic, somewhat mad conquest that has had the greatest influence and has far outstripped its mediocre imitations. In Europe we have returned by more or less brutal stops and starts to the notion of the "object" and to the privileges of the *painting* treated as such; in the United States, ingenuous even in their Surrealist revolt against the oppression of a mechanistic civilization and its utilitarian nonsense, men have discovered the facility and the strangeness of the very act of painting. There had to be this somewhat blind generosity to which Pollock bears witness to give this anxiety its whole meaning. Thus develops a difficult and tentative dialog, which constitutes the value of this century's painting.

"Paintings from the Big Country" [excerpt]

LAWRENCE ALLOWAY

Art News and Review — London, 14 March 1959

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Compare "The New American Painting" at the Tate Gallery with the recent exhibition of "Russian Painting" at the Royal Academy. The Russians did not trust their best art out of the country: the icons and the 'revolutionary genre' were, so the people who dig Russian art said, second-level specimens. We were not given a 'best of its kind' exhibition: small versions stood in for big pictures; key works stayed at home. This attitude of withholding the goods is opposite to the spirit manifested by the American exhibition. The seventeen artists are represented by first-rate works in every case . . . The generosity and seriousness of the International Council of the Museum of Modern Art, New York, is conspicuous in this major exhibition.

Leaving out Sam Francis, Grace Hartigan, and Theodoros Stamos (all in their 30s) the artists, the big ones in the show, were born between 1903 and 1913. It is a generation after Picasso and before the post-war swarm. Who could be put into an equivalent British exhibition? I can think of Sutherland, Pasmore, Scott, Bacon, Hilton, Piper, Moynihan, Ceri Richards. It is clear, even though the British Council or the Contemporary Art Society might enjoy such a show, that the sense of discovery and purpose, power and vitality that marks the American exhibition would be, to put it mildly, missing. If one put on a European version of this age-group, how would it compare? Obviously it is no good listing everybody between 44 and 55 so I will cut it down to the some I have faith in: Giacometti, Dubuffet, Fautrier, Fontana, Jorn. If I have forgotten somebody it wouldn't change the argument much. The point is: Europe cannot match Pollock, Rothko,

Still, Newman, de Kooning, Kline, Gottlieb, Guston (and, by the way, Hans Hofmann).

Most aspects of New York abstract painting have been very well covered. Consider that phase in the 40s in which form (an instrument of clarity and solidity between the wars) was being invested with multiple significance. Baziotes and Gorky are helpfully hung together, which brings out their common biomorphism. This can be described as André Breton did, in one of his best later writings, by calling it a use of "*hybrid* form in which all human emotion is precipitated". Often, however, it is not much more than a custom of sexualising everything the artist can lay his hands on, a vice of Americans hit by decadent Surrealism. But Gorky does it with a terrific elegance that cons us into acceptance of *what* old viscera and *those* organs bursting out all over. Gorky, like Baziotes and Pollock, developed a mature personal style in the mid-40s, before Kline, de Kooning, or Rothko. Baziotes learned from European fantasists such as Klee and Miró but set their hybrid forms (it's a bird, it's a man, it's a superflower) in a stiff format with silvery colour reminiscent of Arthur Dove. He has remained within the limits of this synthesis made in the 40s, elaborating a patient iconography of the biomorphic kingdom. Stylistically Gorky and Baziotes represent a time when Surrealist forms were being converted to new purposes. What the new purposes were can be seen in de Kooning's *Painting* (1948) in which the forms, heavy, blunt, rounded, really are referentially all-purpose and not, as in Gorky, mainly sexy....

This exhibition should make opponents of American art (of whom there are plenty in the newspaper offices, art schools, and drawing rooms of London) realise that it is not all one big splash of paint. The New York School (Motherwell's phrase) is as varied and complex a body of artists with different ideas and performances as any first-rate group can show. Rothko, for example, named 'memory' as one of the obstacles between a painter and getting clarity. To Guston, on the other hand, though aware of the demon process, forms 'possess a past' and one of the revelations of the exhibition is how this 'past' works in Guston's painting. (Both statements are quoted from the catalogue which prints numerous apt first-person statements by all the artists except Francis and Stamos who go in for god-like double-talk.) Guston's 1954 *Painting* is a kind of Impressionism on a grid, done in a style descended from Monet's Morse code. In the later works, the grid has been clenched and folded, the forms thickened, into an allusive density. These forms are nourished on 'memory' like an orchid on flies...,

No other country in the world could put on an exhibition of post-war painting to equal "The New American Painting" and no other museum in the world could have arranged it so well. In America it is often hard to hear a good word for the Museum of Modern Art but in Europe, which has only one decent modern museum, and that in Amsterdam, we can only marvel at the resources and intelligence of the MMA. This does not mean that the exhibition as it stands cannot be faulted. Since the scope of the show is meant to display, to quote Alfred Barr's judicious introduction, 'the central core and the major marginal talent' of Action Painting/Abstract Expressionism, Hofmann's absence is absurd. He towers above about half the painters in the show and is level with most of the others. His absence makes one more critical than one would otherwise have been of the presence of Hartigan (OK with the MMA for years), Stamos (whose vapid atmospherics are a big drop in quality from the rest of the show), and Francis.

Given the Tate Gallery's accommodation hanging probably had to be pragmatic; even so it fails to pass the test of pragmatism. It doesn't work. The presence of Still sandwiched in between Gorky and Baziotes made one sympathetically aware of why the artist loathes mixed shows. The proximity of Newman and Guston is no better, a horrible collision of incompatibles (and not a balance of North Pole and Tropics, or whatever was intended). Does hanging matter? I think it does, because properly done it releases the visitor's power to make connections. Some of the works, however, are hung in ways which make it very hard to grasp the stylistic connections that exist between Gottlieb and Tomlin or between Still, Newman, and Rothko. De Kooning is (unforgivably) cramped into a narrow space by a doorway; Motherwell could have gone here, because his wall-paintings (such as the *Elegy for the Spanish Republic XXXV*) are summary in treatment, not complex and demanding like de Kooning's tough and intricate works.

"The End of Modern Painting"

HILTON KRAMER

The Reporter: The Magazine of Facts and Ideas
— New York, 23 July 1959

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For many artists and intellectuals of the younger generation in Europe, American painting of the abstract expressionist school has recently joined the curious company of jazz, blue jeans, Coca-Cola, Marilyn Monroe, and the plays of Tennessee Williams as one of the more arresting symbols of American life. It is an object worthy of imitation and aspiration. It evokes not only partisanship but an astonishing evangelical zeal. There are critics in London, Basel, and Berlin who write about Jackson Pollock and Willem de Kooning with the kind of passionate conviction that used to be reserved for urgent political questions. The cognoscenti of Amsterdam and Madrid speak the names of Mark Rothko and Clyfford Still with familiarity and enthusiasm. When an enormous exhibition of these and other painters, together with a retrospective showing of Jackson Pollock, was installed at the Musée National d'Art Moderne in Paris earlier this year, Annette Michelson reported in the magazine *Arts*: "The fact that this exhibition remains, after five months, the one really lively topic of discussion in any gathering of artists, critics, or dealers speaks for itself." European advocates of this art do not simply "like" it, they believe in it. They bring to this commitment some of that terrifying capacity to close out all other values which, again, has more often been identified with political irrationalism than with a response to art. For Europe, American painting of this type is less an aesthetic experience than an ideology.

Just why this should be so tells us more, perhaps, about the condition of art in Europe than about American painting. There is no denying that a loss of confidence has taken place in European painting. This is especially true of the School of Paris, whose leadership in this sphere is now challenged for the first time in the history of modern art. What is happening is what always happens in a crisis of this kind: there is a search for new sources of vitality. There is the customary assumption, too, that these sources are to be found in forms of expression as far removed as possible from the sophisticated, overrefined styles of Europe itself.

What the European eye looks for in American painting is not something close to its own sensibility. It does not seek out a confirmation of its own traditions. On the contrary, the European response is precisely to qualities that are regarded as distant from inherited values. It is the otherness of this art that excites the European imagination, and wins it over to what is said to be a new vitality and power.

The exact nature of Europe's interest in our art has been made much clearer by recent reactions to an exhibition called "The New American Painting." This is the show that went to Paris and toured seven other European cities at the same time the large Pollock show was also on the road. It has now returned from its triumphal tour, and is installed for the summer months at the Museum of Modern Art in New York. The museum, whose International Council sponsored the tour, has also issued a special catalogue, complete with clippings from the European press. This volume, called *The New American Painting* (Doubleday, $2.95), is a useful guide to the whole movement, including color plates, biographical résumés, and some gnomic statements from the artists.

In this country, abstract expressionism is now our certified contemporary style so far as the museums, the critics, and the big investors in modern painting are concerned, and inevitably its local partisans have felt vindicated by this resounding victory abroad. To enjoy the fruits of this victory, however, they have had to do some fast work in rehabilitating the value of European opinion. For ten years they have been persuading all comers that Europe was a backwater. Yet when the opportunity came, it still seemed to require the word of this "decadent" culture to confer legitimacy on our native efforts.

For myself, I find this victory ambiguous. What Europeans found to admire in our painting may not be at all what we Americans should like to admire in it ourselves. They responded especially to its raw power, its daring, and its scale. They insisted a little too much perhaps on its physical vigor and on its violence. The poet Kenneth Rexroth reported to *Art News*: "Even those [journalists] who did go [to "The New American Painting" show] got hold of the wrong catalogue and were under the impression the pictures were painted by Wyatt Earp and Al Capone and Bix Beiderbecke." Originality, power, newness—these words are such music to our ears that we have neglected to observe how seldom either profundity or delight was attributed to this art by critics who take such matters seriously. When it came to judging the new American painting, Europe still withheld its ultimate praise and retreated into the euphemisms that are used in any polite society to encourage growing boys. The key to this European attitude came in its reluctance to recognize American painting in its continuity with European tradition. This was the crux. In her report to *Arts*, Miss Michelson commented: "The hospitality [of the Paris critics] was somewhat qualified..., by the suggestion of a condescension to a fresh and interesting art produced by a tribe of noble savages, or by the masochism of the civilized European, submitting to a rape performed upon his exquisitely decadent sensibility (Gide rejecting James in favor of Dashiell Hammett, feeling that a literature which had produced *À la Recherche du Temps Perdu* could take no interest in *The Golden Bowl*)."

This was, in effect, a way of saying that American painting could not be taken to exist on the same level as its European counterpart. Its interest as ideology was affirmed, but its achievement as art was left in abeyance. Yet, when I say that Europeans responded to qualities different from those we ourselves admire, I am probably not speaking of New York's art circles. There has been in New York, too, an odd compulsion to place this school of painting—which spends half its time denying it is a school and the other half wondering if it is a new academy—outside the confines of art. The most famous essay on abstract expressionism, Harold Rosenberg's article on "The American Action Painters" in 1952, specifically warned against the "fallacy" of regarding such work as mere art: "The critic who goes on judging in terms of schools, styles, form—as if the painter were still concerned with producing a certain kind of object (the work of art), instead of living on the canvas—is bound to seem a stranger."

Actually, the whole abstract expressionist movement is intimately bound up with the development of modern painting in Europe. Its impulses date from the influx of European artists to this country in the late 1930's and especially during the Second World War. This was the period when Léger, Miró, Breton, Lipchitz, Mondrian, Chagall, and other luminaries of the Paris avant-garde settled in New York. This distinguished wave of emigration was an event second only to the Armory Show of 1913 in determining the course of American art. Pollock, Gorky, de Kooning, Rothko, Motherwell, and the other senior members of this group all came of age in the atmosphere created by the presence of these Parisian vanguard artists in New York.

The difference between the Americans and their Parisian elders was a difference in attitude toward the same artistic capital. The Americans, as heirs to a cultural fortune they had never had to earn, were free to squander, take chances, risk everything. At the very worst, they would only end up where they started. The Europeans were more conservative, admitting and encouraging new possibilities but unwilling to spend recklessly what had been won at such a profound spiritual cost.

This is the real meaning of the abstract expressionist movement in New York: that it has promised a liberation from culture in the name of an art which, whether violent or serene, resigns from all the complexities of mind which Europe still regards as the sine qua non of artistic seriousness. It has thus brought modern painting to an end, hastening its demise out of some compulsive curiosity to see what the future of art can be without it.

When I go through the galleries of the Museum of Modern Art now and look at these paintings again, I wonder if they can bear this ideological burden very much longer. André Chastel, the critic for *Le Monde*—incidentally, one of the few who clearly understood the European origins of this painting—commented: "We are dealing with a kind of painting..., which no longer takes anything into consideration. And which will have great difficulty in growing old." Such a difficulty is plainly evident in the brittle, dry surfaces, the poverty of invention, the inflated scale. Above all, it shows up in the athleticism going to seed in preciosity which confronts the eye at every turn. If this is the future, the future is going to be meager.

The festivities that celebrated the victorious return of "The New American Painting" to New York took place in a quite different atmosphere, of course. The opening-night events at the Museum of Modern Art had the air of a college town on Saturday night after a big game; I've never seen so many happy faces in a museum. But then, nobody goes to opening night at the museum to see pictures. I remember, though, the remark of a painter I happened to run into that evening. "I'm glad to see this work here, set up on the altar this way and everybody worshiping," he said. "That means it's over, and now something else will have a chance."

Notes

1 Patricia Mainardi, *Art and Politics of the Second Empire: The Universal Expositions of 1855 and 1867* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1987), 138–42 on the Salon of 1867, including the personal exhibitions of Courbet and Manet, and 419–61 on the one-person retrospectives at the 1855 Universal Exposition.

2 For a brief account of the origins of the Academy and the Salon in France, see Mainardi, *Art and Politics of the Second Empire*, 7–10.

3 Patricia Mainardi, *The End of the Salon: Art and the State in the Early Third Republic* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 16, 181–19.

4 See Thomas Crow, *Painters and Public Life in Eighteenth-Century Paris* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1985), 3, 22.

5 Harrison C. White and Cynthia A. White, *Canvases and Careers: Institutional Change in the French Painting World*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), 83, 154.

6 Mainardi, *End of the Salon*, 17.

7 Ibid., 14.

8 For an account of the fine art sections of the Universal Expositions, and an anthology of contemporary documents, see Elizabeth Gilmore Holt, ed., *The Expanding World of Art, 1874–1902*, vol. 1, *Universal Expositions and State-Sponsored Fine Arts Exhibitions* ([New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1988). For selected attendance statistics, including an amazing 48 million people for the 1900 Paris exposition, see 1–2.

9 Ibid., 3, 177.

10 Mainardi, *Art and Politics*, 116.

11 On the "Salon des Refusés," see Albert Boime, "The Salon des Refusés and the Evolution of Modern Art," *Art Quarterly* 32 (1969): 411–26; and John Rewald, *The History of Impressionism*, 4th ed. (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1973), 79–90. The published, but incomplete, catalog of the exhibition can be found in Daniel Wildenstein, "Le Salon des Refusés de 1863," *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* (September 1965): 125–52. On French artists' protests against the Salon system and alternative exhibitions that predated the "Salon des Refusés," see William Hauptman, "Juries, Protests, and Counter-Exhibitions before 1850," *Art Bulletin* 67 (March 1985): 95–109.

12 For an account of the Central European Secessions and their connection with the growing trade in art, see Robert Jensen, *Marketing Modernism in Fin-de-Siècle Europe* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1994), chap. 6.

13 The early history of the Salon des Indépendants is a complex one, involving conflict between two organizations established in 1884: the Groupe des Artistes Indépendants, founded first, and the breakaway Société des Artistes Indépendants, which ultimately overcame its rival. See Jean Sutter, "The Société des Artistes Indépendants," in Jean Sutter, ed., *The Neo-Impressionists* (Greenwich, Conn.: New York Graphic Society, 1970), 213–15.

14 Essays on each of the eight Impressionist exhibitions and facsimiles of the original catalogs appear in Charles S. Moffett, ed., *The New Painting: Impressionism 1874–1886*, exh. cat. (San Francisco Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, 1986).

15 On the little-known Café Volpini exhibition, see Gill Perry, "Exhibiting les Indépendants: Gauguin and the Café Volpini Show," in Paul Wood, ed., *The Challenge of the Avant-Garde* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1999), 164–81.

16 For a cogent argument for this view of the avant-garde, see Robert Jensen, "The Avant-Garde and the Trade in Art," *Art Journal* (Winter 1988): 360–67.

17 On the development of the single-artist retrospective exhibition in France, see Jensen, *Marketing Modernism*, chap. 4.

18 On the Cologne Sonderbund, see Peter Selz, *German Expressionist Painting* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1957), 240–49.

19 For background on museums collecting time-tested and contemporary art, see Bruce Altshuler, "Collecting the New: A Historical Introduction," in Bruce Altshuler, ed., *Collecting the New: Museums and Contemporary Art* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2005), 1–13. For a detailed account of the early development of museums of contemporary art, see J. Pedro Lorente, *Cathedrals of Modernity: The First Museums of Contemporary Art, 1800–1930* (Aldershot, England: Ashgate Publishing, 1998).

20 See James J. Sheehan, *Museums in the German Art World: From the End of the Old Regime to the Rise of Modernism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000).

21 See Mary Ann Staniszewski, *The Power of Display: A History of Exhibition Installations at the Museum of Modern Art* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1998), 16–22; Joan Ockman, "The Road Not Taken: Alexander Dorner's Way Beyond Art," in R. E. Somol, ed., *Autonomy and Ideology: Positioning an Avant-Garde in America* (New York: Monacelli Press, 1997); and Samuel Cauman, *The Living Museum: Experiences of an Art Historian and Museum Director—Alexander Dorner* (New York: New York University Press, 1958).

22 For a political critique of the "white cube," see Carol Duncan and Alan Wallach, "The Museum of Modern Art as Late Capitalist Ritual: An Iconographic Analysis," *Marxist Perspectives* (Winter 1978), 28–51. For an important discussion of this display format, originally published in 1976 as a series of articles in *Artforum*, see Brian O'Doherty, *Inside the White Cube: The Ideology of the Gallery Space*, expanded ed. (Santa Monica, Calif.: Lapis Press, 1986).

23 For Degas's proposal and other installations of the time, see Martha Ward, "Impressionist Installations and Private Exhibitions," *Art Bulletin* 73 (December 1991): 599–622.

24 See Robin Spencer, "Whistler's First One-Man Exhibition Reconstructed," in Gabriel P. Weisberg, ed., *The Documented Image* (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1987), 27–50; and David Park Curry, "Total Control: Whistler at an Exhibition," *Studies in the History of Art* 19 (1987): 67–82.

25 On Barr's and other installations at the Museum of Modern Art, see Staniszewski, *Power of Display*. Also see Christoph Grunenberg, "The Modern Art Museum," in Emma Barker, ed., *Contemporary Cultures of Display* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1999), 26–37.

26 On Surrealist exhibition design, see Lewis Kachur, *Displaying the Marvelous: Marcel Duchamp, Salvador Dalí, and Surrealist Exhibition Installations* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2001).

27 On Siegelaub's work, see Bruce Altshuler, *The Avant-Garde in Exhibition: New Art in the 20th Century* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1994); Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1998), 236–43; and Alexander Alberro, *Conceptual Art and the Politics of Publicity* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2003).

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Page numbers in italics refer to illustrations.

Abbreviations used in subentries:
Autumn Salon ("The First German Autumn Salon"); "Blaue Reiter Exhibition" (The First Blaue Reiter Exhibition); "Dada Fair" ("The First International Dada Fair"); "Exposition du Surréalisme" ("Exposition Internationale du Surréalisme"); "First Papers" ("First Papers of Surrealism"); "Gutai Exhibition" ("The First Gutai Art Exhibition"); "Last Futurist Exhibition" ("0.10: The Last Futurist Exhibition of Pictures"); "Peintres Futuristes" ("Les Peintres Futuristes Italiens"); "Russian Art Exhibition" ("The First Russian Art Exhibition"); "Section d'Or" ("Salon de la Section d'Or")

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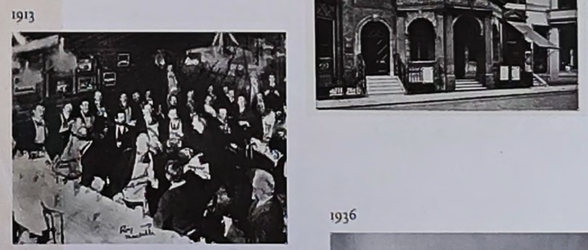

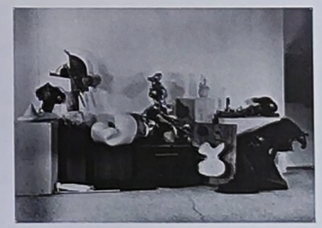

01 Salon des Refusés, Paris, 1863

02 The First Impressionist Exhibition, Paris, 1874

03 The First Salon des Indépendants, Paris, 1884

04 Salon d'Automne, Paris, 1905

05 The First Brücke Exhibition, Dresden-Löbtau, 1906

06 Manet and the Post-Impressionists, London, 1910

07 The First Blaue Reiter Exhibition, Munich, 1911

08 Les Peintres Futuristes Italiens, Paris, 1912

09 Salon de la Section d'Or, Paris, 1912

10 The First German Autumn Salon, Berlin, 1913

11 The Armory Show, New York, 1913

12 0.10: The Last Futurist Exhibition of Pictures, Petrograd, 1915

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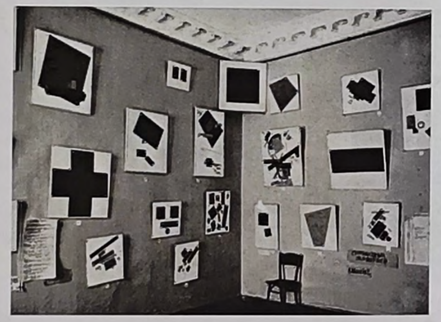
1915



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